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L I F E  
I N  
God's Favour.  
A SEASONABLE  
D I S C O U R S E  
I N  
Death-Threatning Times.  
B E I N G

The Substance of sundry SERMONS  
upon *Psalms*, 30. 5.

*In his favour is life.*

---

By O. Heywood, Minister of the Gospel.

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*Cum inhesitatio tibi, ex omni me omnino nusquam erit  
mihi dolor & labor, & viva erit vita mea tota ple-  
na te: nunc autem quoniam quem tu imples subleva  
eum, quoniam tui plenus non sum, oneri mihi sum.*  
Aug. Conf. lib. 1. cap. 28.

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L O N D O N ,  
Printed for Dorman Newman, at the King's Arms  
in the Poultry. 1679.

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Licensed,

*October 15, 1678.*

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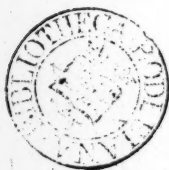
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T H E  
EPISTLE  
T O T H E  
READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

**A**mongst all the useful Treatises that the Press hath of late exposed to publick view, I have not met with any (that I remember) that hath purposely and directly treated of this Subject, notwithstanding it is both needful, seasonable, and profitable, the Point is a Maxim generally subscribed

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to by all men, and not in controverſie, that, *In God's favour is life*: yea, God's Favour is pleaded for, and pretended to by allſorts of men, of all Religions and Perſwaſions; men think much to be excluded from it, the Rich and Religious cannot ſay they are above it, the poor and prophane will hope well, and deſire to live and die in God's favour; the ignorant dream of God's favour, as their only Sanctuary, though God ſay plainly, *It is a people of no underſtanding*, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour. The Learned Rabbies and grave Sages of the world can diſpute about, and think to define the Grace and favour of God, yea, and to confine it to themſelves, and are ready to ſay as the Chief Priests and Pharisees of old, *This people who know not the law are curſed*: intimating that themſelves are bleſſed, as being high in God's Books, and advanced into God's favour above their Neighbours. But Chriſt ſaith to them that juſtifie themſelves, *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is a-bomination in the ſight of God*. The aſpiring Nimrods, the flattering Abſalons of

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of the world, judging they have the favour of God, when they have the favour of Princes or People; but *Haman* and *Herod* soon receive a confutation by divine indignation in hanging up the one like a Dog, and Worms eating the stinking Carcase of the other. The greedy griping Sons of the good old *Eli*, that would have of the best, and quickly, or <sup>1 Sam. 2.  
16.</sup> would take their part by force, though they boasted of, and trusted to the Ark, as having God Almighty in a manner engaged to them thereby, yet themselves <sup>Chap. 4.4.  
Ch. 3.36.</sup> were miserably slain, and their posterity must basely crouch for a piece of Silver, and a Morfel of Bread. Though carnal persons may bless the covetous rich man, yet God abhors him; if *Jeeconiah* will <sup>Psal. 10.3.</sup> set his eyes and heart only to his covetousness, and build him an House by unrighteousness, and Chambers by wrong, <sup>Jer. 22.13.  
17, 18.</sup> and use his Neighbours service without wages, so he shall die unlamented, and be buried with the Burial of an *Ass*; the best part of his name shall be plucked away, and he shall be called only *Coniah*, and though he were as the Signet upon God's Right Hand, (highly favoured, <sup>Vc. 24.26.</sup> and advanced as ever mortal creature

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was ) yet God would pluck him thence,  
and cast him out. Though the King of  
*Tyre* be as the anointed Cherub, and say  
he is God, and set his heart as the heart  
of God, yet he shall be brought down  
to the pit. Though mystical *Babylon* say  
I sit as Queen, and glorifie her self, and  
be big with hopes of immunity from the  
favour of the Husband, whose Spouse  
she pretends to be, yet it shall appear she  
is the habitation of Devils, and her  
Plagues shall come in one day, Death,  
and Mourning, and Famine, and she shall  
be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is  
the Lord God who judgeth her. Nay,  
though *Israel* of old shall fill the world  
with the loud acclamations of the Temple  
of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the  
Church, the Church, God's peculiar  
people, his Portion, his chosen Heritage,  
yet God can take his leave of *Jerusalem*,  
as he did of *Shiloh*, and cast them out of  
his sight, and though they were to God  
once for a Name, and a Praise, and for a  
Glory ; yet they shall become like a rot-  
ten girdle that is good for nothing ; yea,  
God will dash them in pieces one against  
another, and will not pity, spare, nor  
have mercy, but destroy them ; yea, Co-

*razin*

Ezek. 28.  
22.

Rev. 8. 28.

Jer. 74. 15.

Jer. 13. 11,  
14.



to the Reader.

*vazin* and *Bethsaida*, who had mighty works done in them, and were highly favoured with our Saviour's glorious Miracles, yet *It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for them.* And *Capernaum* that was exalted to Heaven in privileges shall be cast down to the lowest hottest Hell in punishment. The seven Churches may lose their splendour, and *Laodicea* her self that was rich, encreased with Goods, and had need of nothing in her own conceit, *i. e.* was adorned with brave Preachers, glorious privileges, sound Doctrine and notable gifts of the spirit, whereby she thought her self more favoured by God than all the rest, yet shall be so disgusted and disowned, that she shall be spued out of his mouth like luke-warm water offensive to his stomach. Thousands in the world are mistaken about this grand affair of so great, yea, infinite concernment. Oh, what a discovery shall be made, and what a woful disappointment shall many have at death and judgment! some will think to plead moral righteousness, others common performances, others their glorious profession, admission amongst, and communion with

Mat. 11.  
20, 24.

Rev. 3. 16,  
17.

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Luk. 13. 26.

with the Saints: some will plead their excellent gifts in praying, preaching and high preferment in the Church, as *Pharisees*; others will say, have we not eaten and drunk in thy presence? hast thou not taught in our Streets? But he will answer these all alike with an I know you not, I will not own you, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Oh, dreadful and unexpected sentence! what, we depart, we that were civil Neighbours, good Church-men, orthodox Believers, sober livers, must we depart? we that heard the word gladly, commended the Preacher, practised many things, had strong convictions, hated Idolatry, loved God's pure worship, and took much delight in approaching to God, wilt thou not have favour for us? must we be banished from thee? oh strange disappointments. Alas, alas, what a discovering, and disanimating and confounding day will that be to several persons in this world, that upon false self-flattering grounds were as strangely conceited of their being in God's favour, as if they saw their names in God's Book, or could look into God's heart, and would

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would by no means be beaten off this conceit, shall now see themselves woefully deluded by Satan and their own deceitful hearts, when it is too late to get into God's favour: Oh, this makes honest Ministers hearts ake, and souls weep in secret, for the pride and folly of self-cheating souls. If we tell them there is danger, bid them search, and deal plainly with their hearts, they look upon us as enemies, think we make more ado than needs, by frightening them with fear-crows, and making false alarms, and scorn our words, bid us look to our selves, they are safe enough, and are in God's favour as well as the best of us, though their unexperienced expressions, and irregular actions give grand ground of suspicion to intelligent Observers: and alas, we are forced to leave them with a deep sigh, and a sad fear that we shall never see them at God's right hand with the Saints another day.

And as many mistake, and are in danger to miscarry to all eternity; so this favour, this special favour of God must needs be of absolute necessity, though whilst men live in prosperity, in the affluence

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Mal. 4. 1.

fluence and confluence of worldly comforts, they make a poor shift to live sweetly, drowning the noise of conscience, rocking themselves asleep in the cradle of ease, running out of God's blessing into the warm Sun (as we use to say) yet a day is coming that will burn as an Oven, and all the proud and prophane shall be as stubble, and it shall leave them neither root nor branch, their worldly wealth shall perish, and their hopes give up the Ghost, when the Heavens shall crack over their Heads, and the earth tremble under their feet. Oh, what will God's favour and Christ's love-smiles be worth in that day, when he shall call the dead out of their Graves, and bid them stand forth to receive the final sentence of absolution, or condemnation, according to their state: then, O then to have the favour of the Lord, Judge of Heaven and Earth will be worth ten worlds: when God shall summon us hence by death, and tell us there is no more room for us in this lower world, he will have us hence, to give an account of our stewardship; oh, then God's special favour will stand us in infinite stead! in prosperity what can quiet  
a ca-

*to the Reader.*

a capacious soul that is still prying and peeping beyond Sublunaries for satisfaction? It is he, the Letters of whose name are *quiescent*, that can give quietness, even the great *Jehovah*. In adversity there is an apparent discovery of the necessity of divine special favour, when God giveth quietness who then can make trouble, and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? Then indeed in this day of calamity, God's favour is seen to be seasonable, when the favour of men is lost, and all things look black about us. Oh, the joy and comfort souls have felt in the light of God's countenance, one smile from Heaven hath fetched the Saints from death to life.

Job 23.29

Hence it is, that God's Children have desired of the Lord some love-tokens, while they have been in this vale of tears, let no man scoff at it, the Scripture warrants it, *Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not*, Jer. 33. 3. So our Saviour, *John 14. 21. He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest my self to him.* This  
is

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is a sufficient warrant for our prayers and expectations in God's way, for as the word of promise encourageth us, so the word of precept directeth and regulateth our desires, certainly God hath promised great things to his Saints that keep in his way, and hath made good his promises on all Occasions in all Ages.

What that token for good was which the Princely Prophet *David* prays for, *Psal.* 86. 17. I will not positively determine; but sure I am it was some evidence of God's favour to him, either in a miraculous or gracious way, in Ordinances, or in providence, by way of influence or evidence, for quickning or comforting his heart. I confess, if this holy man of God, after his own heart, had some special ground to expect extraordinary manifestations of God to him, or for him, it becomes not us to follow him therein, except we had the like ground, either as to externals or internals, lest we provoke God, and ruine our selves by Enthusiastical Presumptions. *Sleidan* in his Commentaries gives us a large account of *Thomas Muncer* in *Alstet*,

Book 5.  
ol. 55.

(a

*to the Reader.*

( a Town of the Dukes of Saxony in *Thuringe* ) that he exclaimed against *Luther*, as giving too much liberty: " For, *saith he*, the body must be made lean with " fasting, and simple Apparel, the countenance framed to gravity, speak seldom, " wear a long Beard, &c. But to the purpose, he taught his Followers to ask of God a sign, whereby he may testify that he careth for us, and that we be in the true Religion, and albeit he sheweth not a token by and by, yet must we nevertheless proceed, pray still, expostulate, yea, brawl with God, that he dealeth not well with us. ( Oh Blasphemy ! ) " This expostulation and anger (*saith he*) " is of God well accepted, for that he " perceiveth hereby our earnest mind and " zeal, and then no doubt, being thus " instantly solicited, he will declare himself by some notable sign, and quench " the thirst of our mind, dealing with us, " as he did in times past with the old " Fathers. And then he makes a long Speech to his Followers, who were eight thousand, tells them they must not be afraid of their Adversaries Guns: " For " all the Pellets they shoot, *saith he*, I " will receive with my Coat: Behold, " (*saith*

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“ ( *saith he* ) what a merciful God we  
“ have, behold a sign or token of his e-  
“ verlasting good will towards us, lift up  
“ your eyes, and see the Rain-bow in the  
“ Sky, for seeing we have the same paint-  
“ ed in our Ensign, God declareth plainly,  
“ that he will aid us in Battel, and destroy  
“ the Tyrants, wherefore set upon them  
“ with a bold courage. They sung a  
Song, and thereby call for help of the Ho-  
ly Ghost; but when the Ordnance went  
off at them, they were amazed, and  
ravished of their wit ( *saith the Histori-  
an* ) neither defending themselves, nor  
seeking safety by flight, trusting to *Mun-  
cer's* promise, looking for help from  
Heaven, but were miserably deceived,  
scattered, three thousand slain, three  
hundred beheaded, *Frankise* taken, *Mun-  
cer* set upon the Rack, *Rhifer* repenting at  
death, God's hand pursuing the Moors.  
So this Story I mention to discover the  
danger of a delusion and imagination of  
Tokens from Heaven, as they did :

1. In open Rebellion against lawful  
Magistrates.

2. For confirmation of their Reli-  
gion.

3. Im-



to the Reader.

3. Importuning and wrangling with God without a word of promise.

4. Charging God foolishly if he deny,  
&c.

We may call these truly Phanaticks, as *Calvin* oft doth: and whoever builds their Religion upon the like weak sandy Foundations, shall find it tumbling down, and themselves deceived. God's Children own none but a Bible-Religion, and dare not expect any thing of God, but what they have a Scripture-warrant for in Precept or President: but how far God's people in succeeding Ages may imitate the Saints in Scripture-story, asking of God a sign, and enjoying it, I shall not at present dispute. 'Tis true, History tells us of the Nobles of *Bohemia*, being to suffer the next day for the testimony of Christ, spent the night in prayer, singing this Psalm, oft repeating this last Petition, *Shew me a token for good*: one of them said, "Be of good cheer, " for even in this God hath heard your voice, to-morrow he will shew some " wonderful sign, whereby he will witness that we suffer for his Cause. In the morning presently after Sun-rising, a beautiful Bow appeared, and compassed the

Clark's  
Martyr.  
p. 170.

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the Heavens, the Martyrs looked out at a Window, and saw a Rain-bow of an unusual colour, the Heavens clear, no rain of two days before, fell on their faces, lift up their hands and voices, praised God for this sign shewed from Heaven, suffering chearfully that day for the truth. Another in the Marian days cryed out at the Stake, *Son of God shine upon me*: immediately the Sun in the Firmament shined on him, though it was a dark and cloudy day. Many other instances I might produce, that Church-Histories abound with, which becomes not us to censure or approve, since God may grant peculiar Dispensations to his suffering Servants, in extraordinary cases, out of his usual Road; but it is not safe for us to dictate them, or to expect that God should gratifie our curiosity: we have a more sure word of Prophecy, and that is the holy Scripture, the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, which are able to make us wise to salvation, yea, to make the man of God perfect, throughly furnished to every good work. If we leave this Scriptural way, and look for tokens from God any other way, we expose our selves to the danger of lying wonders,

2 Pet. 1. 19.

Eph. 2. 20.

2 Tim. 3.

16, 17.

to the Reader.

ders, and Satanical Delusions. The <sup>2 Thes. 2. 9.</sup> Devil would have persuaded *Augustine* to seek a sign from God, but he would not, because he saw many deluded by such Apparitions, and therefore saith, "He that now expects miracles, is himself the greatest miracle, *i. e.* of unbelief. Satan hath often transformed himself into an Angel of Light, and imposed upon credulous Superstition. *Gerson* tells how Satan appeared to an holy man in a most glorious manner, professing himself to be Christ, saying, he appeared to him because he deserved respect before others, but he answered I desire not to see my Saviour in this vale of tears, it shall suffice me to see him in the Heavens, [ *Sit, in alio saculo non in hoc, visio tua, merces mea* ] let in the other world, not in this, the vision of thee be my reward. The like we find appeared to *Luther* in the form of a Crucified Christ upon the Wall, but upon his solemn protestation it immediately vanished. But for asking or expecting signs, see *Pet. Mart. loc. com. clas. 1. cap. 8. fol. 30.*

*De probati-  
one spiritus.*

It becomes God's people to stick to the Law and Testimony, and to desire and

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welcome such tokens of God's favour as these,

1. God's holy Ordinances, God gave the Sabbath to *Israel* as a sign of his being their God: *Exod.* 31. 13. The Ark was a token of his presence, so is the Word and Sacraments to us. God forbid such a day should be on us, not to see our signs: *Psal.* 74. 9. Better (say the people of *Antioch*) want the shining of the Sun, than the Preaching of *Chrysostom*.

2. The fruit of Ordinances, if this and that man be born in *Zion*, it is a good sign of God's favour, and that God will establish it: *Psal.* 87. 5. Oh! where is the spirit of the Lord? Where is the Lord God of *Elijah*? This were a rich mercy to see a day of his power when people are made willing.

3. A Spirit of Adoption of Grace and Supplication stirred up: when God prepares the heart, it is a sign he will cause his ear to hear: *Psal.* 10. 17. A spirit of sloth in this is a sad token of God's anger and absence, *Isai.* 64. 7.

4. A penitent reforming spirit, this was a token of good to *Israel*; *Hag.* 1. 14. Yea, to *Nineveh*, *Jonah*, 3. 8. An unmal-  
leable

to the Reader.

leable, unframeable spirit in people betokens greater blows: *Amos* 4. 11, 12. And for our own particulars, let us be earnest with God for sanctifying Grace, which is a singular token of God's special favour, and a sign the second death shall not have power over us: *Rev.* 20. 6. His spirit being in us is a sign of our interest in him, and resurrection with him. *Rev.* 8. 9, 11. Let us beg of him direction, a token for a way-mark to keep in God's way, the King of Heaven's high-road to the new *Jerusalem*, for this is a Covenant-mercy, *Isai.* 48. 17. Let us beg a token for our protection, preservation, so far as is consistent with his heavenly pleasure in an evil day, a mourner's mark, *Ezek.* 9. Let us beg of God some token of God's affection for our satisfaction, some incomes of his Grace, some kisses of his mouth, sealings of his spirit, which is a blessed earnest of our future; *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. The earnest is part of the payment, for these comforts of grace are grapes of *Canaan*, morsels of the upper Table, *præ-ludiums* and preguustations of eternal enjoyments. Suppose we were all Malefactors, and the King offers a sealed pardon

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don, and withal declares, that such as have not the great Seal to shew, must suffer at the next Assizes, but such as have, must be received to favour, and honoured. The case is ours, oh what running, seeking, using Friends, begging, enduring difficulties, trials should we be content with, that we may have a sealed evidence of the King of Heaven's Favour. Let the mocking *Micols*, and scoffing *Ishmaels* of the world say what they please, it is worth seeking, striving for, prizing, admiring; when God saith seek my face, why should not our souls eccho, Thy face, Lord, will I seek, *Psal.* 27. 8.

This is the design of this small Treatise; and oh, that God would set in with, and second our Preaching and Printing, to begin and carry on this great Match between Jesus Christ and poor Sinners; he hath made the Articles, propounded them to you by us, his Holy Words speak his willingness, these want nothing now but your consent, and the Match is made. Oh, Sinners, we bring you Love-Letters from our Beloved,

*to the Reader.*

Beloved, shew you his excellency, the large Dowry he offers you, the fair House you shall dwell in with him, the pains he hath taken for you: Whether all this will prevail we cannot tell, but if this be the last sentence I must write, or you read, I do by these presents summon you to answer all these Soul-helps before the dreadful Tribunal of the great Judge at the last day, when this amongst other witnesses shall stand upon record against you; if you entertain not this our Gospel, and be not found in God's favour, Ministers that warn'd you at that day must say *Amen* to your just condemnation. But we would rather present you as chaste Virgins, to Christ, as accepted of God, approved of Men.

It is our work to Preach and Write, yours to hear and read, God's work to give success, we therefore follow these poor endeavours with our prayers to the Father of Spirits, for converting and confirming Grace, that you may begin and encrease in favour with God and Man, as our Saviour did, and that we

*The Epistle*

may at last give up an account of you  
with joy, and not with grief, and that  
those that sow, and those that reap  
may rejoyce together, which is the ear-  
nest prayer of

Thy Soul-Friend

Novemb. 9.  
1678.

O. Heywood.

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T H E

C O N T E N T S

O F T H E

B O O K.

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CHAP. I.

**T***En Experiments of holy David in  
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PSAL. 30. 5. [Mid. Clause.]

*In his favour is life.*

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CHAP. I.

**T**He Title of this Psalm is, *A psalm and song at the dedication of the house of David.* What this Dedication means, or with what Ceremonies it was performed, or what House

this was that was dedicated, whether the Temple first or second, or rather, *David's dwelling House*, I shall not dispute; nor what time it refers to, whether his first inhabiting his House, or repossession after *Absolon's* defiling it, I shall not here determine. The Psalm itself may well be called, *A Divine Miscellany of Christian Experiences*: I shall hint some few of them.

1. *David's* lifting up God in praises, that had lift him up in mercy: *verse 1. I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up.* *Exaltabo teil. laudabo.*

B

Soul

Soul advanced by God, will highly advance  
*in altum e-* God ; the higher our state is, the more raised  
*existi me.* must be our praises ; when God magnifies us,  
 the more we must glorifie God. This is a  
 Christian's Duty and Property.

2. *David's Cry*, God's present help and  
 healing : *verse 2. I have cried unto thee, and*  
*thou hast healed me.* Cheap Physick ! it was  
 but a groaning Prayer, and God came with an  
 healing hand : God is a swift and sweet Phy-  
 sician. Pardoning Grace healed his Soul, a  
 merciful Providence healed his Body, Estate,  
 Name.

3. *David's Resurrection from the Grave,*  
 and preservation from the Pit, *vers. 3.* He was  
 at the Graves mouth of danger, or in a Grave  
 of Banishment, but reduced, and as to Soul  
 terrors, near the Pit of Hell, by despair or  
 temptations, but prevented. The Grave of  
 temporal Afflictions, and the Pit of eternal  
 Torments may be waiting for the Saints, and  
 they wonderfully snatched out of both. How  
 oft is there but a step betwixt them and death  
 really, and in their apprehension ?

4. *David's warm heart in God's Praises,*  
 wherein he not only employs himself, but all  
 God's people to help him in praising God ;  
*verse 4. Sing unto the Lord, ye saints of his.*  
 A praying Soul shall be a praising Soul ; the  
 more God's people pray, the more occasion  
 have they of praise, and one Soul cannot lift  
 up God's praise high enough, a Consort is  
 fittest in this Musick : hence Heaven is the pro-  
 per place of praise, where that blessed Quire  
 of

Soul-  
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 Notes of  
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of Saints and Angels will for ever eccho forth God's Glory. Holy Souls are only fit to celebrate the Memorials of his Holiness.

*Sancti ejus  
Sanctitatis  
ipsius.*

5. *David's* tasting both wrath and love in a short space; *ver. 5. His anger but a moment*, i. e. endureth for a short space; but there's quick returns of favour. Wrath is wont to come before Love, death precedes life, a Storm before a Calm; a strong Wind, Earthquake and Fire go before the still, small Voice; the Law before the Gospel; *John Baptist* before our Saviour, that God's Children may by a night of darkness be prepared for, and learn to prize a Morning of Light.

*1 King. 16:  
11, 12.*

6. *David's* carnal confidence in a prosperous state; *v. 6, 7. In my prosperity I said I shall never be moved*, i. e. Thus I talked with my self when I was in abundance, health and quietness. Oh deceitful heart! A healthful man thinks not of sickness. God built him an House, he builds himself a Castle, but it is in the Air. A deceitful heart allures a good Soul into a fool's Paradise. When things go well, security kills us; when God shines in his transfiguring Mount, we will build Tabernacles, but observe it, this is *David's* Mount which stood by God's favour.

*In abundan-  
tia tran-  
quillitatis.*

7. *David's* sudden Confutation, *v. 7. Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled*. Self mounted, soon dismounted, when a frown came into God's Brow, it soured all my pleasure. The turning away of God's face overturns the Souls hopes and Joys, God's hand is at the foot of our Mountain, and if his frown-

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 Name.

*Sepul-*  
*crum.*  
*Porta ad*  
*inferum.*

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ing countenance withdraw his supporting hand, our Mount falls into the Valley of Despair and Discouragement, we are meer Relatives and Dependents.

8 *David's importunate Expostulation, v. 8, 9, 10. I cried to thee, O Lord: —* How often do God's Children (like our wanton Children) change their note, alter their tune? Singing and sighing are near Neighbours. They say the Limner can with one dash of his Pencil turn a laughing into a weeping Face. Thus doth God; *David* was e're while so full of Joy, that he calls all the Saints to help him in praise, now he musters up all his Forces to complain, pray, expostulate. Prayer is the language of grief, as praise is of Joy.

9. *David's comfortable Translation, v. 11.* His Mourning is turn'd into Dancing, Sackcloth into Gladness; a sudden and strange change; bitter turn'd into sweet, darkness into light, Hell into Heaven. Oh what can God do, and what strange effects doth heart-joy produce? The man that was grovelling upon the earth is now raised up, and frisks in the solemnity of a chearful Dance, as one set at liberty out of the restraint and darkness of a troublesome Prison, and he puts off his filthy Rags, or rather, strait and coarse Coat of Sackcloth, and is cloathed with the Robe of Righteousness, and Garments of Salvation. Oh what a Metamorphosis.

10. *David's due sense of God's main end and design in all this, v. 12. To the end that my Glory may sing praise to thee.* His Glory is the best

*Ichosm,*  
i.e. gaudi-  
um solenne  
vultum ac  
maximam.

best thing he hath, his Tongue, say some, his Soul, say others; I say both Soul and Body must joyn to lift up God's praises. Nor shall we repent of sounding God's praise, or be silent, or cease. The more we praise God, the more occasions of praise God will minister to us. *But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.* Thus much for the Context. In all this we may discern what ups and downs God's Servants are subject to in this weary world, like Seamens tossings, or Travellers Road that lies up-hill and down; and what variety of affections are stirred upon several occasions in the hearts of God's Children, joy and sorrow, fear and boldness, desire and averfation, take their turns, and act their several parts in a Christian's Breast.

But to come to the words, in which there is night and day, Thunder and Lightning, the black side and the bright side of a Christian's Cloud, Law and Gospel, wrath and love set opposite to each other, and compared, wherein consider, 1. How the words come in. 2. Wherein the comparison lies.

1. The words come in as a satisfying answer to a tacit objection thus formed, *q. d.* Alas, faith a gracious Soul, how should I help in this blessed duty of praise, as is required *v. 4.* for alas! I feel God's anger upon me, I lie under tokens of displeasure, how can I sing and give thanks?

He answers this by a concession, be it so, yet it's fit there should be an interchangeable succession of joy and sorrow, as of day and

night. 2. Sorrow like an unwelcome guest will lodge all night, but a blessed morning is coming, which will dispel the thick clouds of a sad night. 3. It's but a short night, his anger endureth but a moment, it's but short, though sharp; it will not be always, nor long. 4. It's worth waiting for, his favour it will recompence poor afflicted Attendants, for in his favour is life. Thus for the coherence.

2. Wherein the comparison lies, betwixt God's wrath and his favour. 1. In the Nature. 2. Duration of both.

[ am. 1. 2.

1. In the Nature, Properties, Effects : God's wrath begets night, *i. e.* sorrow, sadness; for night in Scripture oft imports sorrow. How can the afflicted Soul chuse but weep sore in the night, when the Sun of Righteousness is withdrawn. If the wrath of a King be as Messengers of death, surely God's wrath is a Soul's death; but now in God's favour there is life: a man, a Saint lives by the shine of God's Face.

2. They are compared in their duration, God's wrath is but for a moment, for a night, *i. e.* there is a season of God's frowning, whipping, which at longest can but endure to God's Saints the term of this natural life at longest; but his favour is as long as life continues, yea, longer, it runs parallel with the life of the Soul and line of Eternity.

This former part of the Verse seems intricate, because brief and concise, the latter part seems an illustration thereof by an excellent Rhetorical Allusion. [ His Anger ] his Rod,

or



or Whip; for when God is angry he inflicts punishment; anger is short, indignation more grievous, yet both short of hatred: God's anger is manifested by it's effects, when he scourgeth, as men do when angry; so 'tis the fruit of vindictive Justice, for he is not angry as men are.

But the words lie thus, [*a moment in his anger*] 'tis but momentary; but his love is lasting, yea, everlasting: so life is opposed to moment. The sense of the words is this, although for our sins God may sometimes be angry with us; yet in due time he manifests his good will, which calls us back from death to life, wherein otherwise we should die with horror and despair here, and eternal shame and confusion hereafter.

Some indeed read the words thus (making life refer to the former sentence, his favour to the latter) lives (*i. e.* the longest, sweetest life of men is) a moment in his anger (or is momentary) in his good will (*i. e.* when his favour sweetly breaths on us) weeping may lodge with us in the night, but joy comes in the morning. The former part is parallel to that complaint in *Psal. 39. 5. Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand breath.* And that expression is like it, *Psal. 90. 5. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath.* But this reading which we have in our Bibles is generally preferred for several good reasons. I shall wave further explication, and also raising observations, and propound this as the Doctrine to be treated of in the words of the Text, which is an entire proposition.

*Momentum  
in ira sua.*

*Vid. Mr.  
Pool's Syn.  
Critic. in  
loc.*

That, *In God's favour is life.*

There is life in God's love; or God's love is a Christian's life.

It's a Scripture-truth asserted by *David* here, being inspired by the Holy Ghost: and *Moses* saith the same, *Deut. 30. 20. For he is thy life, and the length of thy days* (i.e. not formally, but effectively, by a mentioning of the effect) he is the cause of thy life, or herein consisteth thy life to obey and enjoy him.

In prosecution of this Doctrine I shall open these four general Heads.

1. What this favour of God is, what this life.
2. In what respect God's favour is life.
3. To whom, and in what seasons it is life.
4. Why God's people account God's favour life.

And so come to Application.

## C H A P. II.

1. **W**Hat is God's favour? and what is life? I shall put both these together, and so open the expression briefly.

The word in the first Language signifies will, good will, good pleasure: *Deut. 33. 23.*

*Voluntas,  
benevolentia,  
beni-  
placitum.*

*O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, full with the blessing of the Lord.* The latter sentence explains the former, when God is pleased to bless persons

persons, they have his favour, and it's that which will satisfie them. It also signifies acceptance, *Isai. 60. 7. They shall come up with acceptance* ( or favour, good will ) *upon mine altar.* *Ad bene-placitum.* It's the same word as here. Once more, sometimes our English renders it desire: *Psal. 145. 19. He will fullfil the desire* ( good will ) *of them that fear him.* But as applied here to God, it imports God's great respect to his creature, and it's four-fold.

2. God's favour is his common providence towards all, even to the worst of men: *Isai. 26, 10. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.* And this is our natural life, both as to the original and maintaining of it, good and bad have their dependence upon God's providence; for he holdeth our soul in life; *Psal. 66. 9. God doth not do as Workmen that make an artificial Engine, and set it agoing, and so leave it to its self, but his favour preserves our beings and well beings: Job 10. 12. Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.* By favour is meant either that life is a favour, or that beneficence whereby we are supplied with all needful accommodations. The Heathens *Vid. Pool.* know this, and their Poets sung it, as *Paul* *Syn Crit.* quotes *Aratus* and others, *Acts 17. 28. For in* *in loc.* *him we live, and move, and have our being.* So that the stoutest Champion and proudest Emperour on earth li's at God's favour and courtesie, whether they shall live another moment. So *Daniel* tells that mighty Monarch, *chap. 5. v. 23. That God in whose band thy breath is, and* *whose*

*whose are all thy ways.* O that all men did but live in the sense of this great truth, that in God's favour is their life.

2. By God's favour is meant some signal acts of discriminating providence. Thus God shewed favour to *Israel* his peculiar *Psal.* 44. 23. God drove out the Heathen (*i. e.* the seven Nations out of *Canaan*) planted his people in their room. Why did he so? he answers negatively, not by their Sword or Arms positively, but by thy right hand, and thine Arm, because thou hadst a favour unto them. God's favour was their Armour and Artillery, this produced Weapons for them, both offensive and defensive. Hence *Psal.* 5. 12. *For thou Lord wilt bless the righteous, with favour wilt thou compass* [Heb. crown] *him as with a Shield.* This produceth our comfortable, safe, sweet life, which is emphatically called a life: So *1 Sam.* 25. 6. *Thus shall ye say to him that liveth, i. e.* that lives prosperously, joyfully, comfortably. And *1 Thes.* 3. 8. *Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord: i. e.* we live a life of joy. For as *Rebecca* said of her sad and sorrowful life, *Gen.* 27. 46. *I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth, if Jacob take such an one—What good shall my life do me?* For a life of sorrows is a dying life, scarce worth the name of life in the account of one bitter in Soul. But now God's favour produceth deliverances, comfortable provisions, resurrections from death to life, and all accommodations. Thus God raised *Hezekiah* from a mortal disease, thus he lighted *David's* candle,

*Coronabo e-*  
*227.*

*Isai.* 38.  
*Pla.* 18. 28.

candle, and thus he prevents a thousand dangers, and loads us with multitudes of blessings, whereby our lives are rendred comfortable. And what is the ground of all this? why, God's favour. Consult *Psal.* 91. 4, 14, 15, 16. *Psal.* 85. 1, 2, 3. Oh consider this, it's by God's favour that our life is not an Hell, but so near a kin to Paradise.

3. By God's favour is meant special Fruits of God's distinguishing Grace, vouchsafed to God's own Children, and to none else: *Psal.* 106. 4. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour of thy people: i. e. the favour thou bearest to thy people* (as our Translation explains it) thence it follows, *Oh visit me with thy salvation.* This is peculiar love flowing from the spring of electing Grace, producing all the streams that breed and feed spiritual life in the Soul. From the fountain of God's favour flows converting Grace, which puts a seed of spiritual life into the heart, whereby we live unto God, *2 Cor.* 5. 14, 15. It is the favour of Benevolence whereby God first makes us his people, *1 Sam.* 12. 22. It is the favour of complacency, whereby God takes delight in his people, *Zeph.* 3. 17. and in this Womb are bred all the precious Fruits of Gospel Grace, the giving of his Son, the preaching of the Gospel, the sanctification of Souls, their justification, their communion with God, and eternal salvation. All the privileges that Saints enjoy on this side Heaven, and in Heaven, proceed from the favour of God, and so God's favour is our life spiritual and eternal,  
yea,

*Joh. 3: 16.*

Eph. 2. 8. yea, a living faith, and the life of faith is  
 Joh. 17. 3. God's gift, and a fruit of this favour. This  
 is life eternal begun, this indeed is a life wor-  
 thy calling a life, without which we are but  
 dead men morally, and must die eternally. But  
 the good will and favour of God gives such  
 water to his Saints that shall be in them a Well  
 of water springing up to everlasting life, *John*  
 4. 14. No wonder then if *David* so earnestly  
 desires this favour of God, without which he  
 was not a Saint, nor accepted; *Psal.* 119. 132.  
*Look thou upon me* (i. e. with a propitious fa-  
 vourable aspect) *and be merciful unto me, as*  
*thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.* All  
 have mercies, but all have not tender mercies,  
 which *David* makes great reckoning of: this  
 distinguishing kindness and especial favour be-  
 get a spiritual life.

*Psal.* 69.  
 16.

4. There's one thing more which this fa-  
 vour imports, viz. the sense and feeling of this  
 favour of God in the Soul, produced by a sweet  
 and satisfying manifestation of it to the soul.  
 This *David* intends, *Psal.* 119. 58. *I entreated*  
*this favour* [ *Heb. face* ] *with my whole heart, i. e.*  
*David* longs not only for the fruits of God's  
 favour in his Soul, but the shining of God's  
 face to him, the sweet assurance of God's spe-  
 cial love, *Psal.* 31. 16. *Make thy face to shine*  
*upon thy servant*, which elsewhere is called the  
 beauty of the Lord, this *David* makes the rea-  
 son of that one thing begged that he might  
 dwell in God's House, and all God's servants  
 have sought for it, and looked upon it as their  
 life, light, help, health: *Psal.* 80. 3. *Turn us*  
*again,*

*Psal.* 90.

16. 17.

*Psal.* 27. 4.

again, O God, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved. And Psal. 67. 1, 2. God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all Nations. It is an expression borrowed from men, that when they are well pleased with their Friends, they look chearfully upon them, which begets joy and comfort in their drooping acquaintance: Prov. 16. 15. *In the light of the King's countenance is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.* Even so when God beholds his Children with a chearful countenance, it animates, exhilarates, and reviveth their drooping spirits. So saith David, Ps. 4. 6, 7. *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us: thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and wine increased.* David opposeth God's favour to the vast multitudes of his Enemies, and instead of Armies, he begs God's favour may be lift up on his soul as a Banner ( for so the words import ) *q. d.* men have their friends and confederates to be loving auxiliaries to them, but I desire no other comfort but thy favour for me, and the sense and assurance of thy love to me, shew that thou hast a respect to me, and the brightness of thy pleasant face will scatter mine enemies as mist, or at least dispel those black clouds that sit upon my benighted spirit, and bring day-break. Oh the joy that this begets! not in face, but in heart, true, full, intimate, satisfying: this is the only reviving *Aqua viva* to the fainting spirits, that fetcheth a soul from death

*Attolle in  
vexillum  
lucem vul-  
tus tui.*

death to life, the storms of God's wrath kill the souls comfort, and nip the buds of hopes, but the sweet beams of divine love in the spring-time of God's gracious return put life into the disconsolate soul; even as a child is struck dead by his angry Father's frowns, but quickened by his reconciled Father's friendly smiles. This favour of God begets another life of divine joy, pleasure and satisfaction; this is the life of Heaven, feeding upon the Grapes of *Canaan*,; this is a blessed Paradise, a little corner of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, this is with the beloved Disciple to lie in Jesus's bosom, this it is to have the kisses of his mouth, the joy of his Salvation. It is true, this is not every ones privilege, but sometimes God doth graciously indulge his servants with the comfort of these sensible gusts. As that eminent Scotch-Divine Mr. *Robert Bruce*, when dying, his Friends asked how it was with him, he answered, *When I was young I was diligent, and lived by faith in the Son of God; but now I am old, and not able to go much, yet he condescends to feed me with lumps of sense.* And indeed this kind of life is as it were a kind of life of spiritual sense; *Psal. 89. 15, 16, 17. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoyce all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.* These two latter (I suppose) are meant in this Text, viz. the favour of distinguishing mercy



mercy which begets spiritual life in real Saints, and the favour of God manifested to the soul which begets a comfortable, joyful life. Both these *David* intends here, specially the latter. If you ask further, whose favour this is in which is life? I answer, the favour of all the persons in the Sacred Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, you have them all mentioned in the Valdictory Benediction prescribed to the Priests, *Num. 6. 24, 25, 26. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, [Let God the Father, the fountain of blessings, the preserver of his creatures, bless thee with spiritual blessing, give thee Grace, and preserve it in thee] The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee, [Let God the Son, the Son of Righteousness irradiate thy soul with beams of Gospel-light and Love, and shine into thy heart with the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ] The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace [Let the good spirit of God the comforter bring the report of God's love to thee clear up electing love, apply to thee redeeming Grace, and give thee the comfort thereof] That peace of God that passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus; and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.* This New Testament Benediction answers to that in the Old, and both the peculiar Blessings proper to these persons of the Trinity distributed to God's people.

Yct

Phil. 4. 7.

2 Cor. 13.  
14.

*Opera Trini-  
tatis ad ex-  
tra sunt in-  
divisa, com-  
munibus per-  
sonis com-  
munia.*

Yet withal we must take that Rule that Divines have laid down, that the works of the Trinity [ad extra] to things without, are undivided, and common to all the persons of the Trinity, because the Essence is common to all the persons, so essential Works. Hence Creation is ascribed to the Son, Redemption to the Father, Sanctification both to Father and Son, as well as to the Holy Ghost. Hence Divines lay down another Rule, That one and the same work to the creature in different respects may be either personal or essential, so Christ's incarnation inchoatively is an essential work common to the Trinity, but terminatively it is the personal work of the Son alone. But how we may conceive of God in Worship; or how to expect good from the persons of the Trinity I shall say no more, but refer you to that choice man of God, and great instrument of good, Mr *Durham*, in his Exposition of *Revel. in Dig. on ch. 1. fol. 9. to 20.*

One thing more I must add, that there's no saving favour shines from God to Souls, but only through Jesus Christ the only Mediator of the Covenant. It is only by Christ that God is reconciled to Sinners, Christ is the great Propitiation by whom an Atonement is made with God, God is through his Sufferings and Intercession pacified, and now at last shews himself friendly and favourable to believing Souls: For he saith, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*: *Matth. 3. 17.* In whom, not only with his person, actings, suffer-

2 Cor. 5.

18.

Col. 1. 20.

21.

Rom. 3. 25.

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ferings, but through him with all that come to  
God by him, Eph. 1.6. *To the praise of the glory  
of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted*  
[ i. e. he hath made us gracious or acceptable ]  
*in the beloved* i. e. in Jesus Christ the Son of  
his Love. Never did one stream of Grace issue  
out to Sinners since the fall, but in this Chan-  
nel, never did beam of God's favour savingly  
enlighten, enliven, or rejoyce any heart, but  
in the face of Jesus Christ. Man having lost  
God's favour by the Fall, God will not treat  
friendly with him again to receive him into fa-  
vour, but in this Gospel way of Atone-  
ment.

### CHAP. III.

2. **H**OW is the favour of God said to be life,  
*for his favour is life*, as his favour and  
life are already described, and that in these  
four respects, viz.

As { 1. The Cause  
2. The Object  
3. The Rule  
+ The End } of Life.

1. God's favour is the cause of Life; for  
*Every good thing comes down from the Father of  
lights* Jan. 1. 9. Every good gift of nature,  
accomplishment

accomplishment or accommodation, owns God's common favour for it's Author, and every perfect giving of special Grace, comfort or glory is the blessed product of divine distinguishing love: grace and peace proceed from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus, *1 Cor. 1. 3.* grace to make us good, and peace in the sense and feeling of this good; grace to make our souls acceptable to God, peace whereby we may be comfortable in our selves. See this fully in *Psal. 36. 8, 9.* *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.* Why so? *For with thee is the fountain of life.* [ *Heb. lives* ] natural, spiritual, chearful, eternal life, all lives that tend to our being or well-being are in God as in a fountain, whence they stream; for this fatness of God's House, and river of pleasure is nothing else but the sense of God's love, which depends on God, as Author, *In whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore: Psal. 16. 11.*

2. God's face or favour is the object of life, and indeed so the cause, the sight of God in Christ is the souls spiritual life: *John 17. 3.* *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* *Heb. 11. 27.* By faith a soul sees him that is invisible, and *Heb. 2. 4.* faith is the souls life, the just live by faith. All our present life of comfort consists in the sight of God's pleased face. When God hides his face poor *David* is troubled, *Psal. 30. 7.* But when God shews his reconciled face, the drooping

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ing soul, like the Sun-flower, begins to open,  
chear and revive. Oh the comfort this sight of  
God's face and favour begets in the soul ! And  
indeed Heaven is nothing else but the beatific  
vision, or the seeing of God's blessed and beau-  
tiful face. When the Heavenly Courtiers get  
into the Chamber of Presence, and behold the  
King of Heaven's Face, they shall need no more  
to complete their happiness. So Scripture  
testifies, *Psal. 17. 15. 1 Cor. 13. 12.*

3. God's favour is the Rule of Life, espe-  
cially of a Christian's life. A real Saint acts  
according to this, squares his joys, sorrows,  
cares, fears, desires, delights according to the  
motions or manifestations of God's favour, or  
his withdrawing from the soul. If the King  
smile he is cheared, if he frown he is cast  
down. So *David* here, *He hideth his face, I*  
*am troubled.* But *Acts 2. 28. Thou shalt make*  
*me full of joy with thy countenance.* Yea, this is  
the Rule of a Christian's actions, duties,  
graces, for God's favour influences all, regu-  
lates all. Nay, further, God's providential  
favour is the rule and measure of the creatures  
natural life. *Psal. 104. Thou hidest thy face, they are*  
*troubled, thou takest away their breath, they die and*  
*return to their dust.*

4. But especially God's favour is the end of  
life, the due end of all creatures lives and acti-  
ons is for God's pleasure: *Rev. 4. 11. Subordi-*  
*nate to God as their end. Rom. 11. 36. For of*  
*him, and through him, and to him are all things.*  
All the creatures tend to God, as the Lines to  
the Center; but as all a man's labours in his

He dares  
do nothing  
but must  
have God's  
favour up-  
on him  
therein.  
See *Exod.*  
*33. 13. 16.*  
*Psal. 90.*  
*16, 17. So*  
*'tis his*  
Rule.

Calling tend to uphold a frail natural life, to all a Christians undertakings are for this, to maintain, or obtain God's favour, his attending on God's Ordinances for this: *Psal.* 27. 4. *To behold the beauty of the Lord;* to see his power and glory in the Sanctuary; *Psal.* 63. 12. *Why so? why verse 3. Because thy loving kindness is better than life:* my life is in it, but that's not all, for it's better than the life I live, my life would do me no good without it, therefore he must travel far to gain it. When the Church had lost the sense of God's favour, see what pains she takes, *Can.* 3. 1.—5. She seeks him upon her Bed, then she riseth, goeth about the City in the streets and broad ways, publick, private Ordinances, then enquires of the Watchmen, faithful Ministers. At another time her soul failed when the sense of his favour was withdrawn, and she bids them tell him (by earnest prayer for her) that she was sick of love, she was fainting away. Oh! what would the gracious soul do, be, endure and lose, that he might have God's favour. Why doth he pray, read, obey, give, but that he may comply with God's mind, and please the Lord. He would rather have God's favour than the favour of all the world besides. But more of this hereafter.

The third general Head is to whom, and at what times and seasons God's favour is life; I may say as to preserving of natural life God's providential favour is necessary every moment; but here I speak of God's special favour to his people's souls, and of the manifestation thereof.

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Now there are some special seasons wherein per-  
sons lie under a strong conviction and impression,  
that in God's favour is life; it is true, a Chri-  
stian ought and will lie under convictions, that  
in God's favour is life, both in Religious Du-  
ties, and solemn Ordinances, in the enjoyment  
of creature-comforts and sweet Relations.  
But I shall pass these, and pitch upon these  
seasons, viz.

1. In the first Conversion.
2. In returning after backslidings.
3. In an afflicted state.
4. In near approaches of death.

1. Young Converts in the soul's first change  
and conversion to God, feel that God's favour  
is life, and that in four respects.

1. To discover God's way to the troubled  
soul. As soon as the secure sinner is pricked at  
the heart, and thoroughly awakened, he begins  
to cry out with the Jews and Jaylor, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* *Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?* I want a friendly guide to set me in-  
to the right way, I have lost my self, and know  
not what to do, or which way to go,  
I have been so used to wander, that  
I know not which way to steer my  
course, I am now set fast, and see if I step for-  
ward in my old Tract I am undone, another  
way I must take, and which way I cannot tell,  
my soul weepingly inquires the way to Zion,  
to Heaven I would go, but know not the way: *Jer. 30. 2.*  
for God's sake, ye Ministers of Christ give me  
your best advice what I must do, and oh that

God

*Psal* 107.  
6, 7.

God would favour me so much in this howling Wilderness as to direct me the right way to a City of Habitation: I have gone astray like a lost Sheep upon the Mountains of sin and error, and the way of peace I have not known; oh! that the Lord would make all his promises good to my soul for counsel and direction. Now God's favour in this work of guidance is expressed in such promises as these, which the bewildred soul must make grounds of encouragement and matter of prayer: *Psal.* 32. 8. *Isa.* 30. 21. 35. 8. 48. 17. *Psal.* 25. 12, 14. *Isa.* 42. 16. *Luke* 1. 80.

*2 Tim.* 2.  
26.

2. A convinced sinner wants God's favour, and esteems it his life, if the Lord would give him a turning heart, an heart to turn from all sin to God, knowing that repentance is God's gift, the poor soul is convinced of it's necessity, difficulty, yea, it's own impotency to turn it self, cries out, Lord, thou hast commanded me to turn my self, but that is only to use the means wherein thou hast appointed me to obtain Conversion, for thou art the only proper efficient cause of this great work. Alas! I can no more convert my self than I can create my self, I cannot make one hair white or black, much less make my heart new or holy; this perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights, and is a blessed effect of electing Grace. Alas! though I see my way chalked out I cannot walk in it, I have a rebellious will, Lord, I fear thou hast not given me a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day. Now Lord soundly awake me, thoroughly change me,

*Deut.* 29. 4.



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me, renew my soul. Oh! what a favour would I take a mourning, a turning heart to be. I see the word will not do it, the rod will not do it, I have been *as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, turn thou me, and I shall be turned*: and when I am savingly turned, I shall kindly repent: and I am the more encouraged to desire and ask this favour, because thou hast graciously made these precious promises: *Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 24. 7. Ezek. 11. 19. 36. 25, 26.*

3. He wants an interest in Jesus Christ: the poor convinced sinner sees nothing in the whole world that can do him any good; and as for his own righteousness, alas it is but as filthy rags that rather defile than justify him; and thus he cries out, Lord, now at last I see my own nakedness and wretchedness, I abhor my self, and all I am and have, therefore thou mayst justly abhor me; I must have a righteousness better than my own to justify me, as for my self, the Bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the Covering narrower than that a man can wrap himself in it. When I think of my wicked life by-past, and this wicked heart within me, and God's strict justice against sinners, and that I have nothing to skreen and shelter me from it, I then say with *David, If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand.* But I hear good news of a Saviour who is become a Surety, an Advocate, a propitiatory Sacrifice for sinners: Oh, that God would give me Christ! oh for an interest in his Son! None but Christ, none but Christ, what would I give for him?

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Lord,

Jer. 31. 18,  
19.

Hai. 64. 6.

Horro  
quicquid  
de meo est  
Luth.

Hai. 28. 20.

Psa. 130. 3.

Heb. 7. 22.

1 Joh. 2. 2.

Rom. 3.

24.

Lord, shew me this favour, and I will ask nothing else, if I had Christ, I had enough, but how shall I come by him? only by believing, receiving the favour is the condition of receiving benefit by the favour. Oh, but faith is the gift of God, I cannot believe, my unbelief kills me, I sometimes think I will embrace Christ, but I want Arms, I will run and come to him, but I want Feet, I cannot reach him, many things beat me off my hold of him; I am not able to believe the spirit hath fully convinced me of my unbelief, hath broken all my own faith, and told me I must have another manner of faith, even the faith of God's elect, an unfeigned faith, for without such a faith no Christ, without Christ no hope of pardon, or Heaven. Oh that God would graciously work this work of faith with power, it is only an almighty power that must do it. Oh Lord, pull my unbelieving heart to thee with the attractive beams of thy favour and grace. I stick by these promises for thy Grace in this case: *Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 36. 26, 27. Joh. 6. 37-44. 45. Rom. 8. 32.*

4. One thing more the Soul wants of God in it's first return to him, which is a favourable entertainment, a kind reception of the soul into favour. Oh this would be worth all the world. How the poor returning Prodigal is at a loss, and dares not approach, but being conscious to himself of many misdemeanours, trembles to approach so glorious and dreadful a Majesty, with the Publican standing afar off, smiting his breast, saying, *God be merciful to*

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me a sinner or with the Prodigal, when  
returned to himself, thus approaching to  
God, Lord, guilt appals me, wrath surpriseth  
me, Satan and my own misgiving heart would  
drive me from thee, but the sense of my ne-  
cessity puts me on to look for remedy, and  
there is no help but thy self. But how can such  
a wretch expect any relief from a provoked  
Majesty? *I have sinned against heaven and before*  
*thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son,*  
*yet make me as one of thy hired servants:* let me  
but be taken into thy favour and family, and  
I am well pleased, though I be thrust down in-  
to the lowest place and office. Oh, what shall  
I say? Is there yet any mercy for a poor sin-  
ning soul? Will God ever look towards a Re-  
bel? Shall I ever obtain favour in his eyes?  
There is yet a possibility, there's yet room for  
*it may be*, it may be I may be hid in the day of  
the Lord's anger, it may be the Lord will be  
gracious to me; who knoweth but God will re-  
turn to me in mercy, yea, who can tell but he  
will return and repent, and turn away from his  
fierce anger that I perish not; who can tell but  
that God hath thus long kept me out of Hell  
that he may at last do my soul good, and bring  
me to Heaven. Christ died for sinners, I am a  
sinner, yea, he hath had mercy on great sinners.  
*Manasseth, Mary Magdalen, Saul* obtained mer-  
cy, as patterns of future grace to others, I am  
much tossed betwixt hopes and fears, and can-  
not tell how it will be; if I look at my self I see  
nothing but grounds of despair, for I have  
grievously sinned, to me belongeth confusion of  
face,

Luke 15.  
17, 18, 19.

Zeph. 2. 5.  
Amos 5.  
15.  
Joel 2. 14  
Jonah 3. 9.

1 Tim. 1.  
15, 16.

Dent. 9. 8. 2. face, but to the Lord my God belong mercies and forgivenesses. Here's all my hope, this is the only ground of my expectation. And is there any hope of a forlorn wretch? Oh the very possibility of obtaining his favour raiseth my soul into an extasie, the least hint of hope is worth a world. But will God be pacified towards me? Is not this too good news to be true. Have I any warrant from God for this hope? Oh yes, I read in the Scripture of Truth abundance of sweet promises, upon which I will venture my souls everlasting state, and while I have a word of promise from Heaven to secure God's favour, and pardon to a penitent sinner, I shall not presume, if I be such an one, which I cannot deny but I am. The promises are these, *Isai.* 57. 7, 8. *Jer.* 31. 34. *Isai.* 43. 25.—44. 22. *Psal.* 25. 11. *Luke* 24. 46, 47. *Mat.* 11. 28. *Acts* 10. 43.—13. 38, 39. *Rom.* 4. 5, 6, 7. *Tit.* 3. 5.—

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#### CHAP. IV.

**I** Proceed to the second sort of persons and seasons wherein God's children feel the truth of this Text, *That in God's favour is life*: and that is returning Backsliders, when the souls of  
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4. *Isai.*  
46, 47.  
*Rom.* 4.

God's children are fallen into acts of open scandalous sinning, or a secret course of remissness, unwatchfulness, decays of Grace, and in such a day usually God hides his face from the soul, and leaves it in a woful plight, under a measure of desertion, and alas the soul is now under a convincing sense of God's favour in four respects.

1. The poor backsliding soul wants and longs for a gracious reception into God's favour again: Ah! saith the poor soul, my case is sad and desperate, when I first entred into Covenant with God, I promised constancy, I said come and let us joyn our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant that shall not be forgotten: but alas, how soon have I forgotten it! how soon have I forsaken the Lord! How quickly am I turn'd aside after vain things that cannot profit! Wo is me, ungrateful wretch that I am! my unkind dealing with God is unparalleled! Who ever return'd unto folly as I have done! Oh my sittings loose from God! my guilty conscience accuseth me, God frowns on me, all my former sins stare me in the face, even the sins of my unregeneracy: yea, I am questioning whether ever there was a saving change, for did ever any of God's children carry at this rate! Surely my spot is not the spot of God's children? May not such a Backslider in heart and life expect to be filled with his own ways? Am I not bordering upon that foul sin against the Holy Ghost, seeing I have been once enlightened, and now fall away at this rate, is it possible that ever I should be renewed again to repentance,

*Jer.* 51. 5.

*Heb.* 6. 4.  
*c.* 10. 27.

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e truth  
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repentance, may I not rather fearfully look for  
fiery indignation than a gracious acceptation  
into favour; yet if my sin have not reach'd to  
that degree, this I am sure, it hath been fear-  
fully aggravated with light and love received,  
my frequent relapses, striving of the Spirit and  
Conscience resisted, stilled, which makes my  
very heart ake, and fills my face with shame  
and blushing, so that I am not able to look up;  
I have no ground to expect God's favour, as I  
cannot expect such favour from men: but what  
saith God? I will study and plead these sweet  
Texts, *Jer.* 31. 12, 13. *Hos.* 11. 7, 8, 9. — 14.

24.

2. The backsliding soul wants God's favour  
for receiving the life and degrees of Grace.  
Alas! saith the Christian, by my carelessness or  
sinning I have not only lost God's favour, but  
have defaced God's Image in my soul, I feel sen-  
sible decays of Grace, my faith flags, my love  
cools, my repentance is stopped, all the springs  
seem to be dry'd up, or the streams run faintly,  
the fire of grace is buried under the ashes of  
flesh or corruption, and I would fain have stir-  
red up the gift of God in me, but I cannot, I  
see it will not be, all my rubbing will not fetch  
heat into my benumbed joynts, my heart is  
finiten and withered as grass, nothing but the  
shower of God's grace, and Sun-shine of his  
face can again renew the face of my soul. In  
the Spring I see the Lord alone renew the face  
of the earth; oh, that he would renew his  
work in my heart, and cause the fruits of righ-  
teousness again to bud forth. By idleness of  
the

Phil. 102.

4.

Phil. 104.

30.

the hands the House droppeth through, and by my carelessness and sloth I have made wounds in my conscience, and by the same holes where in sin hath come in grace hath gone out, and now God's wrath drops into my heart, and follows me. Oh that God would again recruit his own work in my heart, which is almost dwindled away to nothing! Oh that this spirit would set an edge upon my dulled graces, damped spirit! Act, O Lord, according to thy word, and remember for me these quickening promises, *Hos.* 6. 3.—14. 6, 7, 8. *Isai.* 35. 1, 4. 44. 3, 4.

3. The troubled Backslider wants peace and comfort. Oh for the sense of God's favour again: alas, this I have lost, my soul is far off from peace, I forget prosperity, yea, for peace I have great bitterness, and when comfort is offered, my soul refuseth to be comforted. Nay, I remember God, and am troubled [reflecting what joys I have had, which are now lost; yea, questioning my interest in him] will the Lord cast off for ever? will he be favourable no more? Oh what a long while is it since I saw that blessed face! his visits are grown very rare, there's a great and sad strangeness between God and my soul. Alas, what shall I do to recover his smiles! I find a taste now and then of his quickening presence, but his comforting presence is utterly gone: I must justify God, and condemn my self; though he should banish me from his blessed presence for ever, yet is there not hope in *Israel* concerning this thing? May I believe that God will re-

*Lam.* 3. 17.

*Psal.* 77. 2.  
to 10.



turn?

turn? Oh it would be a blessed day to see that beautiful face! to feel those joys that once I had, but now have lost! Oh that it were as in Months past, as in the days when God preserved me! when his candle shined upon my Head, and when by his light I walked through darkness! Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, hide not thy face from me: Lord, why callest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? what would my soul give for one of thy wonted smiles? Shall I never regain the sense of thy favour? Wilt thou suffer thy child to pine away in disconsolateness for want of his Father's love? Oh that I might again lie in that blessed bosom! how well shall it be with me upon my return to my first Husband! Lord, remember these words of promise to thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to trust: *Isai.* 57.16, 17, 18, 19.--54.6, 7, 8, 13.--32.16, 17. 66.12, 13, 14. 2 *Cor.* 7.6.

*Hos.* 2.7.

4. All this will not fully content the returning backslider without God's favour to secure him from falling for time to come. Alas, saith the reduced wanderer, I have a backsliding heart, and though I be brought back now, I shall again go astray without new supplies of assisting grace: I feel my heart declining, and it will return unto folly after peace spoken, unless God speak an effecting as well as commanding word, *Go thy way and sin no more.* God's special favour must maintain this work fresh in my heart; turn us again, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved, so will not we go back from thee. Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name;

*Psal.* 85.8.



name; *Psal.* 80. 3. 7. 18, 19. Lord, unless the Sun of Righteousness keep still shining on me, and drawing me up, I shall fall to the earth like a meer vapour or exhalation, if thy favour put not thy right hand under me, I fall and break my bones, dishonour thy name, undo my soul, and never recover. Fain would I hold out, O suffer me not to fall or fail, crown thy grace in me with perseverance ( for suffering and perseverance must be the bottom and top of all graces, or they are counterfeit ) I have many enemies within and without, I discern how apt to fall upon a very slight occasion, I have had too long experience of this treacherous spirit, but I dare not trust it, yet I dare trust thee to keep that which concerns thee in me. Establish me, strengthen, settle my soul, thou hast by thy favour set my feet on the Rock that's higher than I: O' keep me there, my Mountain may soon be removed, but maintain me upon thy Mountain, till I come to the Mount of God. If God be my defence I shall not be greatly moved, yea, I shall get strength that I shall not be moved at all. I beg no more than what I have under thy hand in a promise; *Psal.* 13. 37. 23. 24.—112. 5, 6. *Isai.* 42. 34-54. 10. *Jer.* 32. 33, 39, 40. *Hos.* 2. 19, 20. *Phil.* 1. 6.

3. Another sort of persons and season in which God's favour is valued by God's people as life, is, when they are under some pressing, pinching affliction, then they feel a necessity of God's favour. Now these afflictions are of two sorts. 1. Outward. 2. Inward. An hint of both.

1. Outward

*Psal.* 138. 8.  
1 *Pet.* 5. 10.

*Psa.* 62. 26.

1. Outward troubles in estate, name, body, relations, God's favour is still precious as life it self. Suppose a Christian be poor, hath little or nothing to betake himself to, then a man may make a shift to live upon God's favour. As the good woman said! *have many a time made a good meal of a promise, when I have not had a morsel of meat in the House*. And indeed the godly poor have a double advantage. 1. To live by Faith. 2. To enjoy God's peculiar patronage: *Psal. 140. 12. Prov. 22. 22, 23.* We need to say, He is rich whom God loves, and it's true, for our livelihood consists in God's favour, a little meat will go far when we have God's favour with it. A Saint is not content to have God's leave only to use the Creatures, but his love, therewith. Lord, saith the soul, I have little in the world, but let me have thee, thy grace in my heart, thy blessing with what I have, and I have more than worldly rich men, though I be poor in the world, let me be heir of thy Kingdom.

Jam. 2.

Jer. 17. 17.  
18. c. 22.  
10, 11, 12.

So 2. In the troubles that befall our good name, the poor soul saith, Alas, I see I have lost the favour of men, they reproach me, are a terror to me, but be not thou, O Lord, a terror to me, thou art my only hope, men set against me, be thou for me, then may I bid defiance to all the world; thy approbation is a sufficient fence against all mens censures. Let men report what they will of me, let me have a good report of the truth, and I shall less matter mens verdict, for I pass not for mens judgment or day. But if I be reproached for Christ,

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I look upon that as a singular favour from God, and honour to me. The reproach of Christ is my riches: *Heb.* 11. 26. 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *Acts* 5. 41. *Isai.* 51. 7, 12, 13.

3. In bodily pains. When the Christian lies sick, or pained upon his Bed, among all the visitors that express favour to him, he would have the Lord's company, and the Lord doth condescend to come to him, and not only visit him, speak to him, but puts his Arm under him, and strengthens him upon his bed of languishing, yea, he carries with him, and morning and evening makes his bed for him; *Psal.* 41. 3. Oh happy Favourite of Heaven that's thus attended! such a soul knows, if God sees good, he will favour him off his Bed, and love him out of the pit: *Isai.* 38. 17.

4. In Relative Troubles. Alas, saith the Christian, my Relations are not only poor, but prophane, yea, the greatest Enemies I have in God's way, so that Scripture is fulfilled, *A man's enemies are the men of his own house*; In this case *I will look unto the Lord*; *Mic.* 7. 5, 6, 7. I am content to venture, yea, actually lose the favour of Brother, Sister, Father, Mother, to gain and maintain the favour of God, and when all is gone I do not repent the bargain, I have made a saving match, I am an infinite Gainer. But oh how sad will it be to lose men's favour for seeming religious, and not being so. If you ask for what ends, and upon what accounts Christians would have the sense of God's favour? I might shew this largely, that the affliction might be sweetened, coming to him as

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a token of special love from God as his Friend and Father; though it be a bitter pill, yet if it be lapt in the Sugar of God's favour, the Christians stomach will not rise against it, but bid it welcome, if God send it in favour, he tastes honey upon the rod; the best fruit grows upon that tree. A Father will correct his child in love, therefore in wisdom, pity, in due measure, for a short season, for their good to take away sin, and fit them for Heaven, therefore the Rod is adopted to be as a genuine offspring of the covenant of God's grace: *Psal.* 89. 32. 33. Oh saith the soul, if I can but see God's heart towards me when his hand is on me, I am very well satisfied, let him wound me, so it be a wound of a Friend, let him cut me, so he will cure me, let him do what he pleaseth with me, so he will but express favour to me. And all this God promiseth, *Heb.* 12. 8, 9, 10. *Isai.* 27. 78. *Jer.* 46. 28. *Prov.* 3. 12. *Isai.* 63. 9. *Zech.* 13. 9. *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5.

2. So for spiritual troubles which arise,

1. From guilt of sin: Oh saith the soul, what shall I do, whither soever I go my sin is ever before me, sin is upon me, ah, what can a guilty Malefactor desire, but the Judges favour? This God promiseth; and Christ purchaseth, as I have shewed: look also, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7, 8. *Job* 33. 26, 27. *Mic.* 7. 18.

2. God's displeasure in this case, when the poor soul feels God's anger, the only remedy is God's favour. Oh that God would remove from me the stroke of his hand; *Psal.* 39. 10. Lord, rebuke me not in anger, I cannot bear thy

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thy disfavour, it's a death to me, but in thy favour is life.

3. The corruptions of the heart are an heavy affliction to the godly soul, and make him bow down heavily, crying out with *Paul*, Oh wretched man that I am, these Sons of *Zer-viah* are too hard for me, these Canaanites are thorns in my eyes, these Mother's children put me to hard servitude, and what's the remedy? nothing but God's favour to mortifie corruption, according to that promise. *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* Oh, saith the soul, that the Lord would come in with succour and relief to my crying bleeding heart, and rescue me from these intestine foes, what a favour should I look upon it!

4. The temptations of Satan cost the troubled heart many throws and pangs that are ready to overpower it and lead it captive: when shall it once be that the God of Grace will tread Satan under my feet! *Rom. 16. 20.* Many a time my soul prays against these messengers of Satan, Oh that at last his grace might be sufficient <sup>2 Cor. 12. 6, 7, 8.</sup> for me to vanquish or maintain the conflict: <sup>1 Cor. 10. 13.</sup> Lord, I beg thy favour against the roaring Lion, he terrifies me, do thou satisfy, at least fortifie me against these his fiery darts; sweet Lord Jesus thou wast tempted to be able or fit to succour such as were tempted, thou seest how I am hurried and harassed with him, Lord, thy favour only will set me at liberty. <sup>Heb. 2. 18.</sup>

## CHAP. V.

4. **T**He last sort of persons and seasons of God's favour being as life to the good soul, is dying persons at the approach of that King of terrors, when flesh and heart fail, then it's time for a soul to look after God as Pla. 73. 26. the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. It is true, the Christian hath chosen God's favour before, but now he feels it more sensibly to be his life in these four respects.

1. To satisfy the soul of his safe state, the poor Christian hath been often doubting and disputing his interest in Christ and title to Heaven, but now he thus cries out, Alas! what shall I say or do? my soul is in a dangerous state, I am passing into another world, and I know not whither, I am at great uncertainties about eternity, it is a great journey, the matter is of infinite concernment, Heaven or Hell, Salvation or Damnation lies upon it, the guilt of many sins comes fresh into my remembrance, I am doubtful of the truth of my repentance, my heart is very deceitful, the work is difficult, there are many mistakes, it is easie to miscarry, thousands are shipwrecked unawares. Shall I say with that dying Emperour, Oh my poor wandring, trembling self flattering soul, whither art thou going. thou must converse no more with men, nor jest it out as thou wast wont: oh, whither art thou going! or shall I say

*Animula  
vaguula  
blandula  
quæ nunc a-  
libis in lo-  
ca, &c.*

say with another, I have lived anxiously, and die doubtingly. Alas, I am afraid to go out of the world, not knowing whether God be my Friend or Enemy; oh, for sense of reconciliation! Now the fruits of God's favour to my soul would be worth all the world; if God should smile upon my soul in Christ, I should not be ashamed to live, because I have a good conscience, nor afraid to die, because I have a good God to go to. Let me have faith, that I may die in faith; ~~let~~ me live in the Lord, that I may die in the Lord, so I shall be happy with the Lord for ever. One smile, O Lord, vouchsafe to me a cluster of *Canaan*, a foretaste of Heaven before I go hence, for I cannot live, and I dare not die without thy favour and the sense of it.

*Anxius  
vixi, dubi-  
us morior.*

Heb. 11.13.  
Rev. 14.13.

2. To take away the sting and fear of death, God's favour and the sense of it will only remove fears from the soul going to conflict with the King of terrors, death is indeed terrible in it self, and often presents it self in a formidable shape, and when it looks so ghastly, the poor soul is affrighted, unless the Lord look chearfully upon him. Now the Christian thus expresseth himself, Lord, sin brought death into the world, and it's greedy maw swallows up all mankind, and I am going the way of all the earth, I see its pale face, I feel its tangs fastening on me, the Graves are ready for me, but God's smiles will daunt death, and dash this tyrant out of countenance, God's favour will blow this dust out of my eyes, and prepare me a prospect into eternity; and oh how happy is

Heb. 2, 14.  
15.

1 Cor. 15,  
55, 56.

it to look above the Grave to God's face, and beyond death at Heaven! My Lord Jesus tasted death, and thereby conquered death, and wrested its wounding weapons out of its hands, destroying him that had the power of death, the Devil; and so delivering them, who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage; hence the Christian Champion in sense of God's favour and Christ's conquest may triumph over death, and say, *Oh death where is thy sting! oh grave where is thy victory?* Oh that my soul could see my Saviour laid before me in my grave, perfuming it for me, preparing me for it, bidding me follow him who broke the Ice, drunk up the brook in the way, surely I would then follow my Captain without fear, I should shoot this Gulf without danger, and say with *David*, *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me:* Psal. 23. 3.

Luke 23.  
43.

3. To receive the soul immediately upon dissolution, this must be by God's favour, for the soul cannot enter into Heaven without God's leave and love, they must be special favourites that are admitted into his Chamber of presence. It's true we cannot expect that peculiar priviledge that the good thief upon the Cross had, to whom Christ said, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.* That audible admission was a peculiar dispensation, yet God speaks satisfactorily in Scripture promise, and the souls faith therein may produce that blessed result, *Psal. 49. 15. God shall redeem my soul from*

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from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me, i.e. receive me by his special favour into safety. Oh, with what comfort might I look through death, when I see the Crown in my Saviour's hand ready to be set upon my conquering head, when blessed Jesus will put the palms into my hand, and place my precious soul among the spirits of just men made perfect, with what confidence may I commend my soul into his hands, and trust him that he will keep that which I have committed to him until that day. Lord, now shine upon that soul of mine that is taking its long leave of this body, send a Guard of Angels to be its Convoy through the Devil's Territories into the Heaven of Heavens, and lay it soft and secure in Abraham's bosom. The rich man's pompous Funeral is an insignificant Ceremony to this Transportation, let what will become of my body, so my soul be thus safely lodged with God, then would I desire to be dissolved, that I might be with Christ, then would my soul take the Wings of a Dove, and fly away above the reach of hellish Fiends, or raging Lusts, Lord, for thy favour.

4. The expiring soul wants the sense of God's special favour, that he may lay him down in hopes of a blessed Resurrection. When the soul, the better part, is thus secured, he then takes thought for the case, the body, this goodly Fabrick must be taken down, I must be unclothed, this tender piece is now dissolving, and must be turned to dust and rottenness, shall be a companion to worms and corruption,

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well,

Psal. 31. 5.

2 Tim. 1.

12.

Luke 16.

22.

Phil. 1. 21.

Psal. 55.6.

well, I am content, but let my soul have the sense of God's favour, and I am well assured my body shall sleep in Jesus, as redeemed dust which shall be gathered up at the last day; and oh what a blessed meeting shall there be of soul and body! what a lovely reuniting of this glorious pair, the soul descending with its triumphant Lord in the Air, where Satan shall be dispossessed of his regency there, and the body raised up out of the Grave by the power of Christ's Resurrection, both for ever to be with the Lord; Oh blessed Marriage-day, soul and body married together, never to part more, both solemnly married to the Lord. Here our souls are espoused, there presented to Christ as chaste Virgins; oh blessed soul, oh beautiful body, which shall shine in Glory, Clarity, Activity, Agility, Spirituality and Immortality, there my Body shall need neither Food nor Physick, nor Sleep nor Marriage, but I shall be as one of the Angels of God, this dirty, diseased, distressed body of mine shall be strangely changed, that it may be fashioned like to the glorious body of my Lord Jesus, then shall I be set upon a Throne among those blessed ones, to judge the degenerate *Israel*, yea, to judge Angels. Oh for that day, that blessed day of refreshment that comes from the presence of the Lord, what then will it be worth to have the favour of the Judge! No matter then who be Friends, or who Enemies, if I may have Christ on my side, blessed be God I have now a Friend in the Court, Jesus Christ my Saviour, my Advocate, he it is that then shall be Judge, who will

1 Thes. 4.  
46. 17.

2 Cor. 11. 2.

2 Cor. 15.  
42. 43. 44.

Mal. 22. 30.

Phil. 3. 22.

Mat. 19. 18.

1 Cor. 6. 3.

Act. 3. 19.

will own his members, and not forget his Brethren, but will proclaim that good welcome into his Father's Kingdom, *Come ye blessed of my father, come up hither, and sit with me in my Throne, even as I overcame and sat with my Father in his Throne, welcome my dear Saints, ye have been faithful to death, I will also give you a Crown of Life; you owned me on earth, I will also own you in Heaven, you chose my favour above the world, you shall have my favour, and not the world, you shall be placed on my right hand, but others on my left, you were once in favour with me, and you are now in favour, and shall continue so for ever, come into my everlasting embraces, this is the state I purchased for you, promised to you, these are the Mansions I went before to prepare for you, this is the Kingdom of which I told you, it was your Father's good pleasure to give unto you, it is God's gift, not your desert, it is the fruit of God's favour, not your labour. I know it, Lord, I know it, faith the soul, this could not be from my earning, for it is by grace and meer favour that I am what I am, and what can such an one deserve; therefore am I now seeking thy favour, now at the last pinch, that I may lay me down in my grave in peace, sleep in the dust as in a Bed of Spices, and rise with thy Saints into Glory. In the mean time being fortified with thy favour, I can bid adieu to this weary world, welcome death, hope for life, and therefore my heart is glad, my glory rejoyceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope, For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall*

Mar. 35. 34.

Rev. 3. 21.

John. 14. 2.

Luke 12.

22.

Rom. 6. 23.

Hail. 57. 2.

Psal. 16. 9.

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*shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me. Job 19. 25, 26, 27.*

## CHAP. VI.

**T**Here is one thing more in the Doctrinal Part I shall briefly speak to before I proceed to Application, which is the reasons why a Christian's life is in God's favour: to illustrate and confirm this point, I might shew, 1. What life proceeds from God's favour. 2. Why Saints esteem God's favour to be their life.

1. What life is in God's favour? Besides what was spoken in explication of natural, comfortable, spiritual, spiritually-joyful life, all which depend on God's favour, I shall more particularly open this four-fold life of a Christian, which are contained in, and flow from the favour of God, *viz.*

1. Of Justification.
2. Of Sanctification.
3. Of Covenant Supplies.
4. Of Glory.

1. Of Justification, a justified state is a life. As a man condemned is dead legally, so pardon brings him a new life in a legal sense, thus the  
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just shall live by faith; *Rom. 1. 17.* i.e. by applying the righteousness of Christ to sinners by faith, for their Justification, which is the Gospel-way of Justification; now this work is of grace and favour, not of debt; *Rom. 4. 4.* Meer favour that God would appoint and accept satisfaction from the surety, and not demand full payment from the debtour; so that *to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness, Rom. 4. 5.* This is the stupendious contrivance of free grace; poor sinners that cannot pay a Farthing in order to satisfying Justice, yet reckoned clear upon accepting Christ by faith, yea, and that faith also of free gift, a fruit of Covenant-Grace, here is favour upon favour, favour with a witness. Surely, a poor arrested Debtor accounts it a great favour, if a Friend will be bound for him, much more if paying the whole Debt, most of all, if furnishing him to perform the Conditions; God hath done all this for Believers. Oh what prodigious mercy is this! what an admirable contrivance of Grace! God just still, the Law in force still, sin hateful, the poor soul sinning, and can do nothing to satisfy, yet accepted as righteous in God's sight, as if he had fully answered the demands of the Law. This is the proper product of infinite Grace and Wisdom.

2. A life of Sanctification is of favour: this in Scripture is called life also, *Gal. 2. 20.* *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:* i.e. by his image and spirit working in my heart, bringing forth vital acts, and eternal life within, a spiritual

a spiritual grace without, in holy performances, new obedience; all this is from Covenant love and favour, as Scripture assures us, God's favour is the proper cause of the being of grace, [*Gratia gratiam dans, and gratiam faciens*] it gives grace, and renders souls acceptable; Grace were not grace, if not freely given. Paul saith, *By the grace of God I am what I am*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. It is God's favour that draws out the habits of grace into exercise: *For*, saith our Saviour, *without me you can do nothing*, John 15. 5. And it is *God that worketh in you both to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 13. All that spring of grace in the heart, and those rivers of living waters that flow out of Believers Bellies, proceed from Covenant favour; *Joh. 7. 38*. The very God of Peace must sanctifie wholly, and he alone fills with fruits of righteousness, he gives progress in sanctification, power to perform Religious Duties, fresh assistances for new encounters of undertakings. Let none say we deny holiness, because we exclude it a place in a sinners justification, for these are inseparable companions; we allow it the place the Scripture assigns it, though we dare not put it into the room of Christ's Blood, it is certain where Christ is a Saviour he will be a Sovereign, his benefits or his person cannot be divided, the virtue of his Death and Resurrection go along with their value; newness of life and heart are as necessary in their places, as freedom from wrath and condemnation: now Christ is made Sanctification as well as Righteousness; and no question but a sincere Saint pursues after holiness,

Jer. 31. 34.  
Ezek. 36.  
25, 26, 27.

1 Thes. 5.  
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Col. 1. 10.

Ro. 8. 1. 2.  
1 Cor. 1. 30.

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ness, and bleſſeth God for knocking off his Fetters, as well as paying his Debts. Though a Priſoner be ſet at liberty, yet he is not ſatisfied, unleſs he have his mortal diſeaſe healed. Spiritual health and ſtrength of ſoul to ſerve God are unſpeakable favours, as well as deliverance from guilt and wrath, and God is the Author, and Chriſt the purchaſer, a believing ſoul is the poſſeſſor of both, they are individual twins.

3. A life of Covenant-ſupply is from God's favour, God's bleſſing makes our comforts effectual to attain the end deſigned in this uſe; for *man lives not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord*, Deut. 8. 3. Alas, how can dead things preſerve life in us! God's bleſſing is the ſtaff of our Bread, the ſupport of our lives, and the ground of all our hopes, what have we to depend upon but this? But that which we mean here is Covenant-ſupply, by virtue of a promiſe, and when all things come as tokens of God's favour: *Phil. 4. 19. But my God ſhall ſupply all your need according to his riches in glory by Chriſt Jeſus.* Oh bleſſed word! 1. My God. 2. Riches in Glory, or glorious Riches. 4. In Chriſt Jeſus. No wonder now if wants be ſupplied, all wants of ſoul and body, and that in a Covenant way. It is an admirable Text, hath much marrow in it, which an active Faith will fetch out. The word of God is full of expreſſions to this purpoſe, that there's no want to them that fear him, *Pſal. 34. 9, 10.* That God gives the deſire of the Saints heart, *Pſal. 37. 3, 4. 11.*

22. 26. 84. 11, 12. 128. 1, 2. 132. 15. *Math.*  
 6. 33. Nor do these come as common mercies, but as tokens of special favour; hence *Jer.* 32. 41. *Yea, I will rejoyce over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land, and assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul.* Here is favour with favour. Sometimes God gives gifts, that may be in a sort called giftless, when he gives not himself or his special love, so he gave *Israel* Quails in wrath; for it is one thing for God to give a mercy, and another  
*Psa.* 78. 29, 31. to give it in mercy; but a child of God hath his mercies in mercy, as tokens and testimonies of special favour, which adds an accent and emphasis to every mercy, and makes it come double laden with peculiar respect: shall I call it double gift? Nay, it is Gold throughout, as *Zenophon* relates of *Cyrus's* gifts, 'he gave a Cup of Gold to *Artabarus*, and a kiss to *Chysantas*, the former complained that his Cup was not so good Gold as the other's kiss, because the latter was a sign of special favour. So truly, God's kiss of favour to his people hath more real worth in it, than wicked men's golden comforts, which are but gilded outsides of empty Boxes, but every comfort a Christian hath is full laden with blessing, and whatever it be in point of quantity, yet in point of quality it is like *Benjamin's* Mels, five times bigger than the men of the worlds.

4. A life of Glory and Salvation doth proceed from God's favour: *John* 10. 28. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.* So that this eternal life in Heaven (which only deserves

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deserves the name of life ) is God's special gift, the gift of his favour and peculiar love; *Rom. 6. 23.* God freely gave Christ, Christ freely gave himself for us, and accordingly God gives eternal life to all his members, *Joh. 3. 16. Heb. 9. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Tit. 3. 7. 1 Joh. 3. 1, 2.* It was dear to Christ, but free to us, the manner of God's procuring it for us, and conveying it to us is something strange indeed, but doth not lessen, but rather doth greaten the favour, that so much must be done and suffered as to make it so costly a piece to bring our souls to Heaven. Well may we write this word *Favour* in Capital Letters upon all the steps we take up to Glory, and upon every link of that golden Chain that draws us from Earth to Heaven, from the Dungeon of our natural state into the Paradise of God's immediate presence. Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel, saith *David*, and afterwards receive me to Glory; *Psal. 73. 23, 24. Fear not little flock, it is your fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom: Luk. 12. 32.* If ever we come to Heaven, we must be carried thither in the bosom of God's divine Favour; no man that ever entred those Pearly Gates, could say, I have paid a valuable price for this Heavenly City; it is an inheritance which comes by favour, not by purchase. Let the proud Papist say, I will not have Heaven on Free-cost, *Cælum gratis non accipiam.* we for our parts must with the four and twenty Elders cast down our Crowns before the Throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; Rev. 4. 10, 11. 5. 12.* 2. But

2. But a word or two more of the second Head. Why Christians esteeme God's favour to be their life, I shall not need to enlarge here. It may be so.

1. Because they have enlightened minds to see the difference betwixt God and the Creature, there is such an excellency in God, and such vanity in the creature, that they must needs esteeme highly of God, and lowly of the world; God is the chief good, others are inferiour, inconsiderable, or false and flattering, a Christian through grace is able to judge of things aright, and as they are. The difference betwixt a godly man's judging, and graceless, Doctor *Ames* sets forth thus, An Infant is much affected with a Picture or Image of Meat and Drink, or Apple, or any thing desireable, but a wise man knows how to distinguish betwixt the meer Picture and the Substance, especially having tasted the goodness of the Food. Thus the believing Christian hath tasted that the Lord is gracious, and so longs for more of him, and this is that whereby he lives, so that it is a death to be without God or his Grace.

1 Pet. 2.2.

2. Because the gracious soul hath a sanctified will and affections, and these are changed from what the poor soul was by nature; the heart by nature savoureth not the things that be of God, but those that be of men; but a sincere Christian is born from above, hath a noble principle, an Heaven-born Soul. Those Heavenly Courtiers in the Palace above, the holy Angels, and glorified Saints take little notice of Crowns, Scepters, Mitres, Treasures, one smile of God's

Mat. 16.23.

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God's face is of more worth than all the Monarchies, glittering Gallantries, or Honours of the Earth. So the Saints hearts are transformed into their likeness, have the same grace for quality, though not for quantity, with the Saints in Heaven, and have the like thoughts ( so far as spiritualized ) with those above, for they are clothed with the Sun, and have the Moon under their feet : *Rev.* 12. 1.

3. Because the true Christian hath found the bitterness of sin, and God's displeasure for it, and the impossibility of other things to quiet his conscience, besides God's favour. A poor guilty Malefactor at the Bar may have many motions to put off his grief, but nothing will quiet him, when condemned, but his Prince's favour and pardon: just thus it is with the converted soul, that was lost in himself, and laid under the curse of the Law, and so dead in himself, and evidently perceived nothing could compose his spirit, and quiet his heart but God's favour in Christ. Tell the guilty conscience of honours; pleasures, or treasures of the world, you sing songs to an heavy heart; these things make the Christian sadder, rather than quiet the clamours of conscience: no, no, nothing will serve but God's favour. Gal. 3. 10.  
Rom. 7. 8.

4. Because the sincere Saint looks by faith upon things, he views things by the eye of faith, *Paul's* Perspective; *2 Cor.* 4. 18. *Moses's* Opticks; *Heb.* 11. 26, 27. The eye of faith can cast a mist upon all the worlds glory, and lay its honour in the dust: it can draw a veil over the world's painted face, and withdraw the

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world's veil from before Heavenly Objects, and represent them in their native lustre. Faith can realize the things of God, and set them off with some advantage to sense; it can overlook by-objects; and take a view of God's face; faith can take the dimensions of Heavenly and earthly things, and engage the soul to a proportionable valuation, and a Christian's life is a life of faith, we walk by faith, not by sense. Faith quickly discerns how little sense, or objects of sense can help him at a pinch, the God of Heavenly things only must come in with relief, which must come from God's favour, and faith fetcheth all down from God to the soul, and accordingly begets a high valuation of God's favour as his only life. Thus much for the Doctrinal Part.

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## C H A P. VII.

**T**He Application is various.

1. For Doctrine or Information of our Judgments in sundry particulars.

1. It follows, that Life is a rich mercy: why so? because it is the proper product of God's Favour, *In his favour is life*; it is also that good which *David* takes and makes use of to illustrate and exemplifie God's favour by: he doth not say in God's favour is Wisdom, Learning,

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s, and Faith, Riches, Health, Relations, though these are mercies, yet they are but such as are supported under God by the Tree of life, natural life is a Foundation-mercy; if life be gone, all the comforts of life cease: hence nature desires a perpetuating of its being, and abhors a dissolution. The Devil was orthodox in the Doctrine, (though perverting it in the use) *Job 2. 4. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life.* Divines dispute whether a miserable being, or no being be better? It is true, no being is better than a being in misery, in respect of the individual person: hence Christ saith of *Judas*, *It had been better he had never been born*: but yet in respect of the whole Creation, of which this miserable being is a part, and branch, and in respect of God's will and glory, so a miserable being is better than none at all, and it is a favour from God that we have any being, and we must praise God while he continues it; *Psal. 104. 33.* A wretched being in the lowest rank of God's creatures, is a favour God doth not owe us, and we owe him praise and service for it.

Mark 14<sup>t</sup>  
21.

2. That outward comforts of life are fruits of God's favour. If God's favour be life, it is also our livelyhood, it is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, and it is also rich favour that his mercies are new every Morning, every Moment, God's favour is the life of our Mercies, and the Mercy of our Lives; our outward comforts depend on divine pleasure, and God's good favour. When *David* was blessing God

Lam. 3. 23,  
23.

for his Mercies, he saith, *Psal.* 103. 4. *Who redeemeth thy life from destruction:* [there is the mercy of life] *who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies* [there is for supplies of life] and indeed we do not use to express our observation of, and obligation to the hand that gives, but the mind that inclines the hand to bestow the gift; the favour and good will of the giver is the spring of the motion: all our supplies come of meer favour, godly and wicked have forfeited them into the hands of Justice: *Jacob* acknowledged he was not worthy the least of God's mercies; so may we say, one sin forfeits temporal enjoyments, bless God for their undeserved continuance.

Gen. 32. 10.

3. It follows, That wicked men have many fruits of God's favour, and we must still distinguish betwixt God's common and his special favour: as to the latter, no man knows either love or hatred by what is before him, for all things come alike to all, *Eccles.* 9. 1, 2. Riches of themselves do not evidence God's peculiar favour; for both Scripture and experience testifie, that the worst men oftentimes have the greatest share of the best things of this world. By what tenure they possess these things, I shall not dispute, or whether they be properly usurpers of God's creatures, as to true Covenant-Title in Christ they have none, but a right before men they may have, and some right in God's sight as from his Royal Bounty: as thus, suppose a Malefactor is condemned to die, the sentence is not executed, in the interval before the execution, he hath meat

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meat given him to keep him alive till the execution, he hath broken the Law, and forfeited his life and livelyhood, yet 'tis the King's pleasure and favour he shall be maintained, he is no usurper in using that meat, so God endureth with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Rom. 11. 22.

4. The last Inference is this, That God's Favour is infinitely better than all worldly enjoyments. There was voluminous Disputes amongst Heathen Philosophers, wherein consisteth man's chiefest good, this Text determines the controversie, the chief good of man consists in the favour of God. It seems this was the great Inquiry, and intricate Query in the days of *David*, Psal. 4. 6, 7. *There be many that say who will shew us any good?* Let *David* answer the Question, he will clearly transmit it from the creature to the Creator: *Who will shew?* they meant, who among men? but God alone must answer *David's* diligent Enquiry, let him have a propitious aspect from Heaven, and he is satisfied; let others make their best of the world's Markets, *David* looks for his profit from another Mart and Quarter: God's shining countenance is better to him, than their plentiful Harvest of Corn and Wine, and no wonder if we compare a little worldly enjoyments with God's favour.

1. God's Favour is the Spring and Fountain the original cause of all Favours; and surely, the cause hath more in it than the effect, God's favour is full and plentiful: hence it is called *The fountain of living waters.* It is true, the Jer. 2. 13.  
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streams of God's favour do run in God's covenanted people as their proper channel, yet many plentiful drops sprinkle over to Mountains of *Gilboa*, and Heath in the Wilderness, I mean graceless sinners; but these are but drops, crums cast to Dogs, or showers of outward mercies at the best, but Saints lie at the spring head of Favours.

2. God's favour only satisfies a rational soul, other things cannot, this only brings solid peace and quietness to our minds, satisfaction to our desires. God made the soul for himself and it cannot be quiet till it return to God: *Psal.* 116. 7. Other things are Bread that fills not, nay, no Bread at all, but he that obtains favour may eat that which is good, and his soul shall delight it self in fatness: *Isai.* 55. 2. As a natural body out of its place is not at rest, so the soul must enjoy God, as nothing that is less can fill a vessel of larger quantity or capacity, so no earthly thing can fill a Heavenly Soul, for the soul is bigger than the world.

3. God's favour is spiritual, therefore can approach to souls and spirits, which carnal corporeal objects cannot do, they stick on the outside, the members, senses. Hence said that rich man, *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up.* But what were those Goods to his soul? it was his sensuive, not rational soul that was the better by them, there's no proportion betwixt outward things and spiritual faculties, but God's favour in Christ is adequate and sureable to the soul, it can pierce and penetrate through all the senses to the inward  
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man, and there joyn it self by intimate conjunction with our minds, for it doth not lightly tickle the outward or inward senses, but even possesseth the soul and spirit, one compares the joy of God's favour, and that from the world, to a light sprinkling of the Earth by an Evening Dew, and an abundant drenching the earth with seasonable rain; God's favour waters thoroughly, the worlds drops are but like the sprinklings of water on the Smith's Fire, making it burn hotter.

4. God's favour is to be desired for it self, as the ultimate object of our desires, other things are only desireable for inferiour ends in their secundary respective places, as Physick to recover health, meat to satisfie hunger, &c. but now there is no other end for which God can be rightly desired, but for himself, and all other things in subordination to this end, for all things must be referred to God, as the efficient cause and end of all, when a man is travelling, if he stick in any part of his way he cannot perfect his Journey, or reach to the end thereof, other things are but steps in the Road to this end.

5. God's favour is independent, and needs not be beholding to the creature, as a means to effect the end, it can satisfie souls immediately, and so indeed it doth those in Heaven, for they have neither creature-supplies, nor positive institutions, through which God's favour is communicated to them, his blessed pleased face is their Heaven; so it is in this world, God can, and often doth refresh the hearts of

his children in the absence of means, not only creature-comforts, but his own Ordinances, a  
*Paul* can feel it, whether in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell; but however, as it was abstracted from the creature, so it was above the creature to effect.

6. God's favour is infinite, because it can supply all the creatures in Heaven and earth, of so various necessities at one and the same time; the Sun can but give light to one Hemisphere at once, but the Sun of God's favour shines through the visible creation into mens souls, and to the Saints and Angels in Heaven in a glorious radiant manner, they live more directly under the benign influences of God's blessed face and favour, yet we feel the virtue and comfort of it more reflexly through the Glass of Ordinances. I dispute not whether that which satisfies a soul must needs be infinite, since a soul is but finite; but this is certain, that which satisfies all souls at once must be infinite.

6. God's favour is unmixed, pure, perfect, there is no dregs in this Cup, it is a pure river of water of life, clear as Crystal: *Rev.* 22.1.  
 There is light and no darkness at all, life and no death, blessing and no curse, fulness of joy, no sorrow, Heaven, no Hell, his blessing makes rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it, as to outward comforts, and for spiritual joys, so far as God's favour shines upon the soul, and is not obstructed and intercepted with the foggy mists of sin, fears, ignorances, there is no defect in it, no sadness attends it, but these spiritual

*2 Cor. 12. 2.*

*Quod totum omnibus simul communicatum debet esse infinitum. Ames sent. Seg. 7.*

*1 Joh. 1. 5.*

*Psalm. 16.*

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spiritual Jews have light and gladness, and joy and honour, but in worldly enjoyments there is not only vanity but vexation. Est. 8. 16.

8. God's favour is effectual, it can cure the soul of all its fears, sad thoughts, and scatter all Clouds: *Psal. 94. 19. In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.* Alas! the top and cream of worldly joy from outward comforts is soon flected, or skimmed off with God's dish of affliction, when he emptyeth from Vessel to Vessel, it marrs mirth, but his favour can pluck up the heart from earth, yea, from Hell to Heaven, it can bear up against storms in the midst of hottest encounters, yea, it causeth joy not only in them, but for them. 2 Cor. 12. 10. Jam. 1. 2.

9. God's favour may be made sure, but the enjoyment of the world cannot, all outward comforts are but as liquor in a brittle glass, soon cracked, soon lost. A great man once boasted of three things that he could not lose, his Riches, Learning, the King's Favour; but in seeking a blessing on meat he could not speak sense, was forced to beg relief, and before he died, professed, he was sure the King did care more for the worst of his Dogs than for him. But God's favour is constant, permanent and everlasting, truth and mercy go hand in hand to all eternity. Psal. 101. 5.

10. God's favour always ends well, it begins in good will, it ends in good will, it begins in benevolence, it ends in complacency; it begins in Grace, it ends in Glory, it is so far from ceasing, that it is increasing, it is like

*Solomon's*

*Solomon's* Sun that shines brighter to the perfect day of Glory, like *Ezekiel's* water that grows deeper till the soul arrive at the unfathomable depth of eternal felicity. But alas! the comforts of this world, if the soul have no interest in God's favour like the sweet and clear streams of *Jordan* run down into the dead sea of endless boundless misery.

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C H A P. VIII.

**T**He second Use is of Conviction. 1. To Sinners. 2. To Saints. 1. Is God's favour a Christian's life? Oh what a fearful case are those in that are not in God's favour? Wo, wo, wo to that soul that is out of God's favour, and continues so, and is found so at death and Judgment. Oh what a sad and deplorable state are those in that are not in God's favour! better, ten thousand times better they had never been born. How canst thou live, Soul? how darcest thou die? Who dost thou think will take pity on thee, if God disown thee? How canst thou make a shift to keep up thy heart from terror? How canst thou eat and drink, sleep or work as long as thou art not sure thou art in God's favour? Or if thou mindest not these things, but puttest off thoughts of Soul Affairs a while, how canst thou bear up thy head

head at the approach of death? Dost thou dream of a reprieve or exemption from it? or dost thou imagine thou must die like a Beast, and so feel neither weal nor woe when life is gone? or dost thou think to arrive at Heaven without God's love or leave? canst thou be so foolish as to hope to be happy whether God will or no? Is not life bound up in, and issuing from God's favour? I may say to that soul that hath not an interest in God's favour as the Lord to *Abimelech, Thou art but a dead man.* 1. Thou hast no true spiritual life, but art dead in sins and trespasses: whatever vital acts thou pretendest, thou hast no more spiritual life in thee than a dead carcase, though thou have a name to live, yet thou art dead, thou art but the picture of a Christian; adorn a dead Corps, it cannot put life into it, but makes it more ugly; thy Graces are but dead Graces, Duties are dead Duties, thy Gifts, Comforts, Workings all are dead, and thy soul a dead soul, put into the Coffin of a custom in sin, and ready to be put into the Grave of eternal torments for sin. How canst thou be otherwise but dead, that wantest the Sun of God's Favour to put life into thee? 2. Thou art under the sentence of death, the Law hath passed upon thee, the Gospel declares thee condemned already, thou hast forfeited thy right to all creature-comforts, canst not truly call one morsel of Bread thine own by a true Covenant-Title, though God in general bounty casts such crumbs to Dogs: and for all thy bearing up so big with thy prayers, hearings, hopings, all is but abominable

Gen. 20.3.

Eph. 2.1.

Rev. 3.1.

minable in his sight, nothing thou dost can please God, thou canst find no acceptance with him. Poor soul, thou toylest and trudgest hard to no purpose, if thou be not in favour with God, he will say, who required these things at your hands? Alas, poor creature, all thou art or doest is rejected. 3. Thou art every moment exposed to a natural death, thy life hangs in doubt, and depends upon the courtesie of an offended God, who hath thee in his power, and can strike thee dead any moment of thy life: if thou sawest a Giant stand over thee with a drawn Sword, being thy sworn Enemy, and ready to take away thy life, thou wouldst take but little rest in thy Bed; God is thine enemy, stronger than all the men on earth, and he is just and true, and hath bound himself by an oath to destroy all the workers of iniquity, he is angry with the wicked every day, if thou turn not, he will whet his Sword, he hath bent his Bow, and made it ready, he hath prepared for thee the instruments of death, *Psal.* 7. 11, 12. How canst thou sleep quietly, surely thy pillow is very soft, or thy heart very hard, or thou wouldst never be thus quiet under so much guilt, that knowest not that thou shalt live another hour, thou canst not tell but death may meet thee at thy Board, in thy Bed, in the Field, on thy Road, God hath the advantage of thee, and can soon tumble thee out of this world into another, a stamp of his foot, a word of his mouth, a frown of his countenance will do it, for thou must perish at the rebuke of his countenance. How canst thou evade the arrest

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 ral death thou enterest upon the bitter pangs of  
 eternal death, which consists in a separation of  
 the soul from God, and tormenting pain of  
 soul and body under divine wrath. Alas, soul!  
 dost thou know what an everlasting banish-  
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 means, this is the Hell of Hell, and though here  
 thou canst be content to live without God's fa-  
 vour, yet it will be another manner of thing  
 to be in Hell without the fruit of God's fa-  
 vour, here it is contenting, there it will be  
 tormenting, then thine eyes will be opened to  
 see what is in God's favour, to know the worth  
 of it by the want of it. If the withdrawing  
 of the sense of God's favour have filled Saints  
 Hearts with intollerable pangs near a kin to  
 these of the damned in Hell: oh what an inex-  
 pressible horror and anguish shall the hearts of  
 damned wretches feel, when they see all their  
 fond and groundless hopes frustrated, having  
 given up the Ghost, and in the room of their  
 self-made comforts weeping, wailing and  
 gnashing of teeth, instead of Wine and mirth,  
 sensual delights and pleasures, to drink of the  
 wine of the wrath of God, poured out with-  
 out mixture into the Cup of his Indignation,  
 where soul and body must be tormented with  
 Fire and Brimstone in the presence of the holy  
 Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. Ah  
 dreadful disappointment! ah woful state of  
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2 Theff. 1.

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Rev. 14.

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some case art thou in, there is but a step betwixt thee and death, but an hair-breadth betwixt thee and Hell, it is but stopping thy borrowed breath, and thou art in endless misery, God hath ways enough to dispatch thee, and Satan, whom thou art serving, is waiting for a Commission to strangle thee! he pusheth thee forward into sin apace, that thou mayst hasten into the same condemnation he is in, and God leaves thee to thy self, and glad thou art of it, that thou canst pass on undisturbed to the pit of destruction, and now thou canst laugh at death as a fable, slight the thoughts of damnation as unconcerned therein, despise the way of obtaining God's favour as inconsiderable, thou art now ripening for ruine, sin hath made thee as stubble fully dry, and justice is upon the Road to reap thee, and cast thee into the fire of eternal wrath, and though thou art sleeping upon the Bed of carnal security, yet thy judgment of a long time lingreth not, and thy damnation slumbreth not. Oh couldst thou have a peep-hole into Hell, and see what's become of those graceless souls that were once as careless and confident as thou art, it would affright thee out of thy wits, or wickedness, and indeed it is a wonder that guilty consciences discovering wrath over them, Hell flaming under them, do not run mad, and lay violent hands on themselves, as *Judas* did, or at least roar out like tormented Fiends as *Spiras* did. I often think of what *Augustin* said, I would not for all the world be in an unregenerate state one hour, lest in that hour death

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2 Pct. 2.3.

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snatch me away, and thrust me into Hell. Oh, that thy heart, poor sinner, did meditate terror! Oh, that the sinners in *Sion* were but afraid, and would bethink themselves how they are able to dwell with devouring fire, with everlasting burnings! or rather, that you might enquire some way of escaping that wrath to come, those everlasting torments. But there is no hope, sinners will not fear, till they feel what this favour means by the want of it, and what wrath means by the sense of it. It seems it must be poor Ministers sad fate still to labour in vain, and to cry out, who hath believed our report? Well, poor sinners will feel what now they will not believe, though we die, yet God's word of threatening will take hold of sinners, and though now they will not lay it to heart, yet in the latter days they shall consider it perfectly, the time is coming when it shall be known whose words shall stand, God's, or theirs; Death and Judgment will determine the controversy. You will say what a stir do you make about God's favour, are we not all in God's favour, we hope God will not be so severe as you are, will God disown us, we trust not, God is more merciful than to damn us.

*Answer.* Do you think all Folks are in God's special favour? that is contrary to Scripture and reason; or do you think God will cast none into Hell for ever? If you will not believe God's word, you shall have your confutation another way, but it shall be a costly conviction. Do I need now to tell you again

Isai. 33. 14.

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Isai. 49:4.

c. 53. 1.

Zech. 1.

5, 6.

gain, that God will not be merciful to any wicked transgressours, and that it is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that form'd them will shew them no favour. That man is in a sad state indeed that cannot be saved unless God be false to his word, that must be damned if God be true; for multitudes tell us, that unregenerate, unholy, unconverted sinners cannot be saved, are not in God's favour, yet they hope it may be otherwise, *i. e.* they hope that God is not God, for if he be God he must be true, righteous, holy, not indulging men in sin to gratifie their lust, nor yet saving their souls to please their selfish humour, they will find it fall out far otherwise, be they they great or small, they shall find that God will cast them out of his favour that slighted his Love.

But that I may manage this Conviction more fully, and bring it home to consciences, I shall speak to four sorts of persons, *viz.*

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| 1. Presumers  | } of God's favour. |
| 2. Abusers    |                    |
| 3. Neglecters |                    |
| 4. Rejecters  |                    |

1. Presumers upon the favour of God, that imagine they are in God's favour, and yet have no true Scripture-warrant for it, for he that hopes without solid ground from the word of God is a presumer, and alas, many do so, suppose a poor Beggar please himself in imagining that

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that such a rich man would give him a thousand pounds, but hath no promise nor encouragement from him of any such kindness, will not all persons laugh him to scorn for such a fond delusion? Was that mad man at *Athens* any richer for challenging every Ship that came to Harbour for his own? who so confident as those that have least ground? I have observed this palpable difference betwixt a presuming Hypocrite, and a true child of God. 1. That graceless souls are fond to apply God's Favour to themselves, gracious are very jealous, are troubled with many doubts and fears about it, you can hardly perswade them of it; when as you cannot stave off the former from grasping at it by misapplication. 2. Graceless presumers dream of God's favour without the consideration of his Justice, Truth and Holiness; a penitent Child of God is very apt to pass over the thoughts of mercy, being much taken up with dreadful apprehensions of his Justice: Alas, how shall I escape the devouring justice of a sin-revenging God! and he is never quieted till he see how justice and mercy kiss each other in Christ's undertakings. 3. Graceless presumers run all upon justification by God's Grace and Favour, but forget Sanctification, and their own duty: but a gracious soul is discouraged, whiles he longs after Grace and Holiness in his own heart and life, and sees so little. 4. The poor presuming Soul dreams of God's Favour absolutely, but studies not Gospel-conditions, to which God's favour with all the effects thereof are promised, and a godly

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Christian dares not apply pardon, reconciliation, &c. because he finds not that faith and repentance which he knows God requireth, and to which he annexeth the effects of his special favour in Christ. Oh what damnable delusions are built upon these mistakes! Alas, how many are gulled and beguiled with misinformations and misconstructions in these fundamental Cases!

Here I might reckon up the many pleas and pretences men bring to perswade themselves they are in God's favour, I shall but hint them, I need not stand to confute them. 1. One hopes he is in God's favour because he is prospered in the world with Estate, Friends, Health, Honour; but if so, the Turk can boast of success and favour as much as any. Others on the contrary think they are in God's favour because afflicted, then tormented Souls in Hell might plead God's favour. 2. Others plead they hear the best Preachers, enjoy pure Ordinances, but Christ cashier's them that hence pleaded his favour, *Luke 13. 26.* 3. Others God hath honoured with notable gifts of Discourse, Prayer and Knowledge, but *Saul* and *Judas*, yea, the Devil himself might plead for God's favour from Gifts as much as any. 4. Others plead a change in their courses, and some visible reformation of life; but this of it self will not evidence God's favour: *2 Pet. 2. 20.*— 5. Others plead that they are merciful, forgiving, favourable to such as offend them, and they hope for favour from God; but *Saul* was unsound, and out of favour, notwithstanding

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withstanding this good property, *1 Sam.* 11. 13. 10. 27. 6. Others think they have God's favour, for they beg it in every undertaking, and would not set about any enterprize without it; but *Saul* an Hypocrite, and at last cast off did as much, *1 Sam.* 13. 12. yea, if God answered not, he examined the reason to find out the sin that hindered God's favour, *1 Sam.* 14. 37, 38. yea, he shews great dislike of sin, and zeal to reform it, or punish it, *v.* 33, 39. yea, he continued his Duties after he heard that God had cast him out of favour: see *1 Sam.* 15. 23.-- 31. yet for all this, was not in God's favour, and quite rejected. 7. Others plead their love to God, and respect to God's people, but there is such a love to God and his people as doth not evidence special Grace: thus even a *Saul*, *Balaam*, and wicked men may not be altogether void of love to God and his Saints. 8. Others plead Convictions of Conscience, terrours, fears, humiliations, deep foretastes of another world, which is no more than *Ahab*, *Felix*, *Judas*, and those *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. could plead. Others imagine their soundness in the faith, harmless conversations, hearing the word gladly, doing much in compliance therewith, will at least evidence, if not, procure God's favour; but *Rom.* 2. 18--24. *Phil.* 3. 6. *Mar.* 6. 20. will contradict this conceit. 9. Others will needs argue themselves into God's favour from their diligence in duties, their inquiries after their duties and salvation, but these in *Isai.* 58. 2. and the young man, *Mat.* 19. 20. were as fit to plead this as they; yet not in special favour.

10. Others hope God favours them because they are much affected in Ordinances, enlarged in duties, they continue long in Fasting and Prayer, but the Pharisees stony-ground Hearers had as much ground to plead this as they, *Luke 18. 11, 12. Matth. 23. 14-13. 21.*— 11. Others can go along with the foolish Virgins in having Lamps, trimming them, keeping company with wise Virgins, desiring Grace, using some endeavours to obtain it, yet alas, cast out of the Chamber with an *I know you not*: *Mat. 25. 2.*—14.

I say not but these things are good so far as they go, but they are not full effects and sufficient evidences of God's favour, or special love in Christ, you must look out for more satisfying grounds. Observe it, there is nothing wherein persons are more apt to be mistaken, and more endangered by mistaking than imagining they are in God's favour. Men are apt to flatter themselves with hopes of immunity in sin from conceits of the mercy of God, and though they live sinfully, yet say, *Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come unto us*, *Mic. 3. 11, 12.* Alas, poor sinner, it is not thy confidence, but Scriptural Evidence that will carry it. It is a sad astonishing consideration to hear deluded sinners bear big with hopes of God's favour, and when you examine their grounds they have not one that will bear water, or hold weight in the balance of the Sanctuary. Art thou in God's favour that never felt wrath, and wast not yet brought through the pangs of this new Birth! Art thou

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in God's favour, and canst not produce a Gospel repentance, justifying faith, working love, nor any one saving Grace in sincerity? Canst thou imagine thou art in God's favour, when thou never didst give up thy self to God in Covenant to be ruled by his Laws, comply with his will? Art thou in God's favour that either makest no conscience of worshipping God, or dost it but formally, and knowest not what it is to pour out thy soul before him, or enjoy communion with him? Nay, but man, how canst thou judge thy self in God's favour, when thy conscience tells thee of a sweet sin thou takest pleasure in, and art loth to part with, which is totally inconsistent with God's favour? For if thou regard iniquity in thy heart, God will not hear thy prayer, nor respect thy person. Men may flatter thee, and say peace, peace, good men may be deceived with thee, and approve of thee, thou mayst have quietness in thine own conscience, and sing thy self asleep in the bed of security, but all this while God may thunder out threatnings against thee, and hate thee as his Enemy, and for ever cast thy soul into torments. Alas, poor souls, that we poor Ministers could weep over you that are enemies to the Cross of Christ! Oh that you did but see your danger before it be too late! Oh that God in mercy to your souls would deliver you out of this burning.

*Psalm 66. 13.*

## C H A P. I X.

2. **A**Nother sort to be reproved, are abusers of God's Favour, (briefly to hint these) now men abuse God's favour two ways. 1. By invalidating it. 2. Perverting it.

1. By rendring the favour of God null, or ineffectual to attain the ends of God's designs thereby. God's favour should leave a sweet favour upon mens spirits, and lead their souls to God. *Rom. 2. 4. Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance?* i. e. should lead thee to repentance and new obedience: alas, that these Silken Silver Cords of Love and Favour should draw our Iron Hearts no nearer God! since God's goodness is such an attractive Loadstone, and hath won so many hearts! Alas, Sirs, what are you made of? where's your ingenuity? If men had expressed the thousandth part of favour to you; oh what workings of Bowels would it have wrought? and shall God's kindness be lost? will you always go on to receive the grace of God in vain? will you go on to return evil for good, hatred for his good will? Alas, that you should still go away from your best Friend, and forsake your own mercies, you may be sure that the more favours are conferred on you, the more coals of fire are heaped on your heads, if you attain not God's end; besides

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besides, you do evidently demonstrate that you are wicked ; for of them 'tis said, *Isoi. 26. 10. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.* Willfullness under kindnesses is a black brand of a wicked heart ; Reprobates are usually hardened by that which softens others, when Word, Rod, Love, Light, Convictions, and all Disputations rather make worse than better, it's fearful. Lord, pity that soul upon which all likely means are lost ; cursed ground, which neither shower nor Sun-shine, humane diligence nor Heavenly influences make fruitful, lay it waste, throw it to the Common with a Gospel-curse upon it, let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever : if after all this it bear Thorns and Briars it is rejected, nigh unto a curse, whose end is to be burned, *Heb. 6. 8.*

2. Perverting God's favours, turning them to a wrong use and end, those are ungodly men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness ; *Jude 4.* As when men do pervert the outward comforts of life, which are God's real favours, and use them as provisions for the flesh, weapons of unrighteousness, incentives to sin, and instruments to serve Satan, by gluttony, drunkenness, pride, lust : oh how ill doth God take this, yea, the very creature groans under this Evil, and the usual fruit thereof is either plucking that person from the world, or pulling that abused mercy out of his hands ; see *Hos. 2. 8, 9.* But oh that God's indulgence should be abused by wretched sinners, as a pillow to lay their Heads and sleep upon ! yet

thus it oft proves: *Ecclesj. 8. 10. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the children of men is fully set in them to do evil.* The better God is to them, the worse will they be, desperate antipodes to Heavenly Bounty, like churlish earth, the more it is manured the more barren it grows, or bad earth that produceth weeds instead of herbs under the droppings of Heaven. But oh what prodigious Monsters are these that argue from kindness to self-murdering cruelty, from God's mercy to a lawless liberty to sin, from the abounding of Gospel-grace to the abounding of iniquity, such diabolical Disputants as these in this hellish Logick, the Apostle repels with an *abst, God forbid*, Rom. 6. 1, 2. *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid.* Far be that from us to make such a lawless inference; let it never be spoken or done in Christ's School, let no man that pretends to be a Saint shew himself so irrational and illogical, as either willfully to commit a sin in hopes of pardon, as if God's pardons were like the Popes Dispensations to break God's Laws, or else to return into folly after peace spoken, and presume that God is gracious, and will not punish or damn him; it will appear that as God hath favours to bestow, he hath also justice to execute, and when mercy goes off the stage, severity shall enter, and act a dreadful Tragedy upon the poor sinner, these favours will turn into Faggots to scorch the sinner in Hell for ever, this sweet oyl of Love will, when turn'd into flame, be like melted

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Lead poured upon their naked Soul with addition of multiplied damnations in eternal torments. As the sense of unkindness torments awakened Consciences, under great kindneses, so the fruits of unkindneses are incensed wrath and indignation, abused mercy turns into fury, the more of Heaven here, if men go without it, the more of Hell hereafter. Justice will be most glorified where Grace hath been most magnified and vilified; if God's Justice enter an action against us, the appeal is to God's Throne of Grace in Christ, but if Grace and Love it self commence a suit against us, whither can we flee for relief or remedy?

3. Another sort of persons that fall under the lash of Conviction is neglecters of God's Favours, refusers of his kindneses, that prefer  
1. Mens Favour: Or 2. Sensual pleasures to the favour of God.

1. Alas how many are there that ambitiously desire the favour of the great men of the world, many will entreat the favour of the Prince, and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts. This ambitious humour of pleasing men to obtain or maintain their favour and good will, is a great obstruction to faith, and destruction to sinners: *Joh. 5. 44. How can you believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?* Sometimes, it seems, mens favour is inconsistent with the favour of God, and true Believers find it a hard matter to deny their credits, or venture upon disgrace, or the worlds disfavour for Christ, a *Moses* could do it, but many fail here, it is a  
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very tender point, a man's good name is himself, and what will his life do him good when repute is gone? How can men live in the world when out of all mens favour? This is hard to pass, few get to a point, and say, Lord, let me have thy favour with the forfeiture or loss of all mens favour. But alas, what good will the favour of great men do you in the hour of death, or day of Judgment, then the light of their countenance shall be cast down, alas, they cannot relieve their own aking Heads or condemned souls, ask them to befriend you, that God may not be angry, see if they can bail you from the arrest of death, or bring you off at the Bar of God, yea, try in lesser matters now, make the experiment in your pangs of conscience, or pains of body, and see if their favour or friendship can drive away either, nay, alas, they cannot help themselves in these cases, in God's favour alone there is life, yet almost all men slight the favour of God, make no great reckoning of it. God may reserve his favours for whom he pleaseth, for their parts they stand in need of no such thing in their vain imagination, but when death and judgment come their eyes will be opened, and their hearts roundly convinced of this truth, that *in God's favour is life.*

2. Alas, how many prefer lusts, sensual pleasures, and esteem more lightly of them than of God's favour, they observe lying vanities, and so forsake their own mercies, *Jonah* 2. 8. Poor distressed sensual sots that matter not for God's favour, *i.e.* his special distinguishing

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guishing kindness and love, if they may enjoy what gratifies the flesh, alas, can the enjoyment of sensual delights, or worldly profits any way compensate for the loss of God's favour, meats for the belly, and belly for meats, but God will destroy both it and them. Alas, both pleasures and body will be removed in a little time, and all contentments will vanish away, as if they had never been, but God's favour will endure for ever, yea, will make persons both perfectly and perpetually happy : 1 *John* 2. 17. *The world passeth away, and the lust thereof : but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.* Ah, soul, when thou shalt see those gracious souls that longed, panted, prayed, endeavoured for the favour of God above their lives, made happy in God's immediate presence, and thy miserable soul ( which took the world for thy portion, and wast well satisfied, if thou hadst so much of the fruits of God's common Bounty, as to gratifie sense, thou slightedst God's special favour ) at last banished from his face and favour for ever, oh how will this add new wounds to thy despairing, and thou wilt be ready thus to bemoan thy soul ; Ah wretched creature that I am, woe unto me, time was that God's favour might have been had, Christ obtain'd it, the New Covenant contain'd it, Gospel promised it, Ministers offered it, many looked after it, and now possess it in yonder glorious Mansions, but I poor careless sinner slighted it, did not judge it worth a sigh, prayer, an inquiry for obtaining it, I presumed that I had it, would not be beat off that fond conceit,

1 Cor. 6. 13.

ceit, I judged them fools, or my enemies that  
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 with other matters, and was contented with  
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 forced to discern both worth and want toge-  
 ther, I am now banished from what I slighted,  
 and that punishment of loss of God's favour is  
 both equal and suitable; woe is me, I shall never  
 see his blessed face, my former sensual pleasures  
 are gone, as if they had never been, but the  
 sting still remains and sticks in my soul, and  
 gnaws my conscience for ever: Oh that I had  
 taken to this betimes; oh that I had read,  
 and heard, and prayed, and examined my  
 conscience, and asked questions to procure help  
 to discover sincerity, and a way to obtain assu-  
 rance of God's favour! oh that I had wallowed  
 in dust and ashes with a broken heart, and weep-  
 ing eyes all my days! Oh that I had made it  
 my business to lay open all my sins by confession,  
 to condemn my self at the Bar of Justice, and  
 have made my timely appeal to the Throne of  
 Grace! Oh that my soul had had a true, lively,  
 saving faith, instead of this fancied faith that  
 now undoeth me, by deceiving me; I thought  
 faith was nothing but a belief that I was in  
 God's favour, that my sins were pardoned, and  
 my soul should be saved, *i. e.* that I might be-  
 lieve a lye; for now I feel by sad experience it  
 was not so, there was no reality in these things:  
 Oh that I had made diligent enquiry into the  
 nature, properties, actings of true justifying  
 faith, possibly I might have escaped these tor-  
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ments, and have sitten down with yonder\* blessed souls at God's right hand in his immediate presence, but my day is done, the Gulf is fixed, my hopes are lost, the day of Grace is over, my soul is lost, and must for ever, for ever be banished from the presence of the Lord, and punished with everlasting destruction from the powerful hand of a sin-revenging God: this, this is the dreadful fruit of slighting the special favour of the eternal God. But you'll say, is there any such men as slight the favour of God? and who are they? I answer, yes, Scripture and experience telleth us of many instances: there's but too many *Esaus* that for a morsel sell their Heavenly Birth-right, the time would fail me to reckon up a curled *Cham*, a mocking *Ishmael*, stupid *Saul*, treacherous *Judas*, an Apostate *Julian*, and all the rabble of prophane wretches that are gone down to Hell for slighting the favour of God: and I may say to every graceless sinner, how canst thou escape, that neglected so great salvation. Alas, it is plain enough thou dost not mind or matter this affair, thy language, thy carriages, thy whole conversation doth declare to thy conscience and others, that thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: alas, poor creature, where are thy cares, fears, tears, and soul exercises about this business, didst thou ever examine thy self about it? what time dost thou spend dayly in seeking God's favour with thy whole heart? How doth this take up thy thoughts, what thou must do if death should arrest thee, and thou art at uncertainties in this case? Nay, canst

Heb. 12.

Heb. 2. 3.

Act. 8. 21

canst thou not rather spend days, weeks, months and years, and never think of this, as though thou wert totally unconcern'd in it? any thing but this takes up thy mind; the God of Heaven pity thee, thy case is sad, thou art out of God's favour. But more of this in another use.

4. The last sort of persons that are to be reprov'd, is rejecters of the favour of God, such Swine and Dogs there are, that do not only turn their backs upon the favour of God, but trample these Pearls under their Feet: these are of two sorts also.

1. Gross Offenders.

2. Hot Persecutors.

Amos 6. 3.  
to 7.

Job 21. 13,  
14, 15.

1. Gross Sinners, swinish, brutish spirits, that like Atheists put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near, that lie upon Beds of Ivory, and eat the Lambs out of the Flock—drink Wine in Bowls—that spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave, [yea, to Hell] who are these? The Text brands them for Atheists, therefore they say unto God, depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: what is the Almighty, that we should serve him; and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him? This is not only the heart and life language, but even the lip language of the Atheists of our days; what great matter is it whether Folks pray or not; for ought we see it goeth as well with such as make not such a stir in Religion, as those that keep such a quarter, men make more ado than needs, if there

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there be a God (putting it in doubt as the Devil to *Eve* at first) yet this God hath an equal respect to all his creatures, he is all goodness, and surely would not make creatures to damn them, and 'tis but a fond thing for men to torment themselves with melancholick conceits of another world, which is uncertain, we know what we are, or have here; but we know not what shall be hereafter: therefore let us live a merry life, cast away cares, and skim the cream of creature enjoyments, let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die, and there's an end of us. And indeed no wonder such Hogs as these live a swinish life, since they have the Atheists Belief; and when they are full of Husks of these low creature-comforts, lift up their snouts against Heaven, and scorn the Dainties of the upper Table. I must leave these incarnate Devils (nay, worse than the Devil, for he cannot be an Atheist, though it is his work to make Atheists) to the dotages and disappointments they shall meet with, being confident that those that despise his favour shall feel his anger, and lie under the insupportable displeasure of that God, whose friendship they willfully reject. In the mean time, let these wretched sinners that chuse death before life, yea, that practically judge themselves unworthy of God's favour, and of eternal life, consider but that one strange heart-melting Text, *Psal.* 81. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. See the melting Oratory God useth to win his peoples hearts to him, his relation to them, promises, former providences, willingness to do  
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*Plenus por-  
corum fili-  
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for them as much as they can ask: *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*; yet for all this, hear God's complaint, *But my people would not hearken to my voice, Israel would none of me*, q. d. Alas, my people thought not me worth owning, they thought my favour would do them no good, I was not at all prized by them, they thought they could shift well enough without me. The God that made them upholds them, offers them his grace, love, yea, himself to make them happy. I was rejected, they were coy and froward, they would have none of me for their Husband, Lord, Saviour, I must leave them unconquered, not prevailing on them to do them good, my spirit must go away grieved from them, it seems they and I must part, well, I'll turn them loose, I will leave them to themselves, I gave them to their own hearts lusts, and now they are filling up the measure of their sins, and when they are come to the height, I will hide my face from them, and take away the hedge of my common providence, and I will see what their end shall be. It shall be seen what poor shift they can make to secure their hearts from terror, and souls from torments, to whom now will they flee for help, where will they leave their Glory? without me they shall bow down under the Prisoners, (chained Devils) and they shall fall down under the slain with the rest of damned souls in everlasting confusion: Oh then there shall be weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth, then I will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh; then shall they call upon me,

Deut. 32.  
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Isa. 10. 3, 4.

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but I will not answer, for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord, they would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof: *Prov.* 1. 24, to 34. Read *Jer.* 16. 5. 13. 18. 17.

2. There are some so desperate in rejecting God's favour, that they reject all that have it, and like those the<sup>e</sup> worse that are in favour with God, they only consult to cast him down from his excellency, that is in high favour with God, the more God expresseth his love, the more they express their hatred, as *Ishmael* did mock *Isaac*, or as the Patriarchs their Father's darling *Joseph*, there is a spirit of envy that swells against such as are higher in God's Books, than themselves in the hearts of wicked men: what envy wrought in the hearts of the Pharisees against our Saviour, because he said he was the Son of God? What Bedlam rage possessed the frantick Jews against *Stephen* when he said he saw the Heavens opened? They cryed with a loud voice, stopped their ears, ran upon him like mad men. The like do malignant Villains against the Saints at this day, if they hear any speak, though with words of truth and soberness, of their experiences, interest in God, communion with him, evidences of his special favour, &c. Alas, because these sottish Swine relish not these things (though it be in Scripture-language, and according to the warrant of the Word, yet) they are ready to mock them, and call them in scorn holy Brethren, holy Sisters, but indeed accounting them a pack of canting Hypocrites, that are worse than o-

*Psal.* 62. 4.

*Acts* 7. 56.  
57.

thers, because they will needs be better than others, and will take upon them to censure their Neighbours, as low, carnal, wicked, because they talk not at the same rate of high flown nonsense (as they deem it) with themselves, thus sober gracious Christians are branded as Fools, Fanaticks, Enthusiasts, and generally accounted such as are otherwise, and rated at with hellish disdain, or Pharisees, Separatists, or those the Prophet speaks of, that say stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. But alas, these wretched Miscreants know not how to distinguish between an empty ostentation of shews of Holiness, and a sober profession of the power of Godliness and so speak evil of the things they know not and split themselves upon the Rock of Persecution, both as the sin and punishment, undoing themselves for ever. Oh, that men would be wise at last, and not finite at Christ through the joys of his members, nor kick against the pricks. Think with thy self, man, when thou art abusing Professors, such an one is either a Hypocrite, or a Saint, if an Hypocrite, notwithstanding this fair shew, then woe to me that have not gone half this length, never wept, and prayed, and lived as he hath done: he hath far out-gone me, and yet he is short of Grace and Heaven. Oh then, how far short am I, that am so far short of him, woe is me I must mend my pace, or I shall come far behind: shall he perish with all those experiences, what shall become of me that have none at all? I had need give over mocking, and fall a working for my

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my poor soul. If he be indeed not hypocrite, but a real Saint (as for ought I know he is, for 'tis too great a work for me to judge the heart contrary to words or actions) oh what a fearful case am I in that am fighting against God, and scorning those that God is pleased to own, better a Millstone were hanged about my Neck, and my self be cast into the depth of the Sea. Matt. 18. 6.  
 How dare I look in the face of that God whose Favourites I have despised? Will not their Master take his servants part. What good can I do in opposing them that are approved by the great God. Let my soul be in their soul's case both now and at the great day, Lord, have mercy upon my soul, and be favourable to me.

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## C H A P. X.

**T**HUS I have levelled the Arrows of Conviction at the breast of poor graceless sinners.

2. I shall briefly challenge the Children of God, that are indeed really under the sweet Beams of divine Favour, but are such as deserve a reproof also upon these four accounts,

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|---------------------|---|---------------|
| 1. Slighting        | } | God's Favour. |
| 2. Dispiriting unto |   |               |
| 3. Mistaking        |   |               |
| 4. Misusing         |   |               |

1. Slighting God's Favour: Alas, how few of us do esteem of God's Favour as Life: ah, where is an holy *David*, that could say, thy loving-kindness or benignity is better than life: *Psal.* 63. 3. Objects of sense are near us, and usually more affect us, seldom are our hearts taken up with the thoughts of it, endearedness to it. How few of us do stir up our selves to lay hold upon God, and quicken up our hearts to labour, and lay out our selves to get it assured to our hearts; that we are indeed in the favour of God, yea, cannot we be often without the feeling of God's favour a long time? at best do we not prize the gift more than the giver? It is a piece of egregious folly to look only at the hand more than the free mind in a gift. Do not outward comforts please us more than the comforts of Grace; Left-hand more than Right-hand Blessings? Ah, Sirs, are the consolations of God small to you? are you afraid of being happy? Is the favour of men worth seeking, and is God's favour of no value? Shall God propound and promise the mercy, shall Christ purchase it, shall the spirit offer and convey it, yea, assure us of it, and shall we still make slight of it? And shall the Lord wait to be gracious, and our hearts loth to entertain the fruits of his Grace? Will not a day

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day come when we shall have need of the assurance of God's love? Will not slight thoughts of God's favour wound deep at death, or in soul-trouble? ah, that we could be ashamed of our own egregious folly. Lord, that thy children should prize their Father's smiles no more! What is of worth, of use, if God's favour be not? what can do you good without it? how can you desire to go to heaven, if you desire not that wherein Heaven doth consist? Lord, pardon this woful senselessnes, ingratitude and security.

2. Many of God's Children are much dispirited, discouraged, and dejected in this case, full of fears, jealousies, misgivings of heart, when they remember God they are troubled, as *David* saith, *Psal.* 77. 3. Thinking, oh but this God is none of my God, I have no title to his favour love-tokens. How many such poor crest-fallen Saints are there, that are ready to groan out their souls in sad complaints with deserted *David*? *Psal.* 7. 8, 9. Hence proceed the souls sad and slavish fears in approaching to God; nay, rather, the soul comes not at God; and observe it, the less you come to God, the less willing will you be to come to him; guilt and fears breed strangeness. Oh, I have carried at such a rate that I dare not look God in the face, his justice affrights me: his mercy hath taken its leave of me, my soul is in darkness, and darkness begets terror, I am afraid God will call my sins to remembrance, I have little grounds to expect his favour, but rather to fear his frowns, yet dare

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not but come though dragged into God's presence, as though he would rather hurt than help this self-condemning spirit. Oh how unbecoming a Saint is this uncomfortableness of spirit, where is that sense of God's love, trusting in his mercy, delighting in God, rejoicing in his praise? Alas, by this means the legal affrightments prevail instead of Evangelical Tenderness, a heart full of fears is in the room of a soul full of love; thus true Religion degenerates into a spurious servility, instead of amiable approaches to God as a friend, the poor soul is ready to carry at a distance from him, as though he were an enemy, or to imagine by duties they shall bribe or flatter the infinite Majesty to treat them gently. Alas, Sirs, this is not that reverence and godly fear the Scripture speaks of, but a base born cowardise of spirit, or unbecoming trembling that vents it self in superstition, or Apostacy; for either such worship God according to their fancies, to please him, and pacifie his anger, or quite fall off to Atheism, for men will soon leave what they love not; and if such could cast off this fear, they would cast off this care of Religion, but Christianity engageth to a fearing the Lord and his goodness, and approaching to him, and conversing with him out of the apprehension of forgiving Grace. Alas, Sirs, is not God infinitely good and gracious? is not his favour towards them that fear him? doth not the Lord take pleasure in his people? and should not his people take pleasure in God? Is not the joy of the Lord our strength? doth it become God's

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own children to serve him grudgingly? Have we not been undone by our cursed jealousies and unbelief? The Lord humble us for that peevishness, sourness, untowardness of our naughty hearts, and help us for the future in sense of his favour to serve the Lord with gladness, to come before his presence with singing.

3. The ground of all this discouragement is mistaking God's favour: alas, there's much misjudging betwixt man and man, that breeds much unkindness: but oh how sad is it for Christians, God's dear Children, to mistake God's Dispensations. Psalm. 100. 2.

1. In point of Correction.

2. Evidences of peculiar affection in spirituals.

1. Though God over and over again tell his Children, that his heart may be towards them even then when his hand is upon them; nay, whom the Lord loves he chasteneth: yet how hard is it if for a Child of God to read love in the Rod, yea, Covenant-love and faithfulness? How few can see divine favour in taking as well as giving a mercy? Few of us know how to rejoyce in God with *Habakkuk* in the world's disappearing? and fewer that can rejoice in tribulation. But we cry out under affliction of wrath, nothing but wrath, he comes to call my sins to remembrance, he comes to kill me, this is one of God's arrows of vengeance, now he is beginning his Controversie, which will not end till my soul be in Hell. When God plucks away child, estate, name, oh I am undone,

*Hab. 3. 16.*  
*Rom. 8. 35.*

this is a fruit of God's displeasure, but have you not as good reason to say, Oh what love is in this Rod! God is removing my idol of jealousy, this Child I prized at too great a rate, it is fit that should go that interposeth betwixt my eye and God; I grew wanton with my Estate, or secure, and was saying my Mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved; blessed be God that would not suffer my soul to take any rest in the creature; oh what a mercy is this, that God hath dried up that stream of which I was in danger to surfeit, that I might drink more freely of the fountain of the water of life, it is rich favour that he will take the pains to whip me, and bring me home by weeping-Cross, rather than to suffer me to wander from him by my wanton spirit. This were indeed becoming a Child of God, but how few of God's Children thus argue, and how seldom can the best taste honey in God's Rod? Nay, 2. The Children of God are too apt to mistake the very smiles of God's face, and the true genuine tokens of God's favour: though conveyed to them by the hand of the spirit; surely it is sad to father God's gracious impressions upon the Father of Lies, as well as lay the Devil's Brats at God's door. When God communicates gracious hints as evidences of his love, it is an unworthy thing to call these delusions, or sparks of our own kindling, this goeth to God's heart, he takes it very unkindly. 'Tis true, Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light, but the spirits sealings carry their own evidence along with them, and

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and the Scripture-touch-stone tries both Satani-  
cal Delusions, and the Spirit's Manifestation,  
God's Cordials are of another nature, and pro-  
duce different effects than Satan's kick-shaws.  
Oh how often hath God shined upon thy soul?  
how sweetly and seasonably have the Patents of  
Divine Love been confirm'd? How many a kind  
welcome hast thou had with God? yea, what  
a line of love hath been drawn through all  
God's carriages towards thee? and yet dost  
thou question his favour, soul, or believe the  
infernal spirit rather than the God of truth, or  
thy undoubted experiences? Ah, how unworthy  
a thing is this? Will a Father that hath born a  
dear love to his Child, and dayly cares for him,  
take it well to have his love questioned upon e-  
very base whisper of an ill-willed Adversary?  
that's an unhandsome retorting: *Mal. 1. 2. I*  
*have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Where-*  
*in hast thou loved us?* They put him to prove  
his love upon every slight occasion. It is hard  
when the constant tenour of a Husband's car-  
riage towards his Wife is full of tenderneſs,  
that every seeming slighting must be construed  
a forsaking by a jealous Wife. How ill doth  
God take it when *Zion* said, *The Lord hath*  
*forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me?*  
*Isai. 49. 4.* And what tender expostulations doth  
God use to satisfy her, that it is not according  
to her misprision: *verse 15, 16.* Alas, whence  
comes it to pass, that if evidences be not fairly  
writ, and legible (though the souls own neg-  
lects and miscarriages often blur them) all is  
lost, the poor Christian questions all? Ah,  
Sirs,

Sirs, may not Money be in the Sacks month, and you not see it? may not the Lord of the Land be your dear Brother *Jesph*, though you do not know him? yea, may not he be carrying on designs of love, though you have hard thoughts of him! it may be thy soul is grievously haralled with blasphemous thoughts ( which thou hatest as the Devil their Author ) well, must not God be thy Friend, because Satan is thy Adversary! because the Devil doth tempt, doth not God love? Who more favoured of God than Christ, and who more violently assaulted than he? Doth the Husband love the Wife the less, because she is sorely tempted, but is vexed, tormented, burdened with impetuous solicitations to wantonness: nay, doth he not pity her, and love her the more for her faithfulness. The God of Heaven knows and hears thy groans and griefs, prayers and fears, and will both succour and pardon thee, because he favours thee. Let the Devil say what he will, and do what he can, for he is a mediator of differences, sometimes accusing God to the soul, he is the great Tale-bearer to separate very Friends. Oh, but what clear proofs might you produce of divine favour to confute Satan's slanders? You may be assured he is what his word represents him, and not what Satan misrepresents him. Muster up thy experiences, Christian, which have been a lively comment upon the promises, and oppose them to Satan's base insinuations, that from henceforth thou mayst not bely the Lord, nor deny his Graces in thy heart, or his special favour to thy soul

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4. Misusing or abusing God's favours and kindneses, by

1. Unthankfulness.
2. Unfruitfulness.

1. An unthankful heart is the grave of many favours, and shall there be no resurrection of mercies out of these graves? *Israel's ingratitude was a prodigy, and Deut. 32. is a song to perpetuate the remembrance thereof to all Generations, many receipts, no returns. Oh how astonishing is this? how unsuitable to the ingenuous spirit of a Saint. David could rise at Midnight to give God thanks, when God's favours came into his mind, and he makes account, Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name, Psal. 140. 13. Paul was a man of many mercies, and a man of many praises, Deo gratias was always in his mouth. Ingratitude is an Heathenish sin, and leads to many vain imaginations and brutish abominations: Rom. 1. 21—24. It is that foul sin that breaks out in the last times, and makes the times hard and perilous, and is yoked with unholiness: 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2. It is a sin that renders men worse than Brutes, yea, the most sottish Beasts, Isai. 1. 2, 3. Ah, foul, shame with thy ingratitude, what a base, unworthy, disingenuous spirit hast thou, that canst so easily pass by so great favours? Dost not thou thank God for a meals meat, and wilt thou not take notice of spiritual food? canst thou deny but God hath visited thy soul with many real favours? what means all these Convictions, impressions, sustentation, and consolations that thou hast had? are all these small*

to

Psal. 56. 15.

to thee? Do not they deserve thy praises? Is not thankfulness the tribute thou owest him? Canst thou do less than acknowledge what God hath done for thee? shouldst thou not call upon others, and say, come all you that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul, and should you not desire them to help you in praising God, as *David*, Psal. 34. 3. *O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.* Ah, soul, if thou be not thankful for God's favours, God loseth his Glory, thou loosest the comfort of mercies, and thou wilt have a sad account to give another day. The God of Heaven raise up thy heart to a thankful frame, otherwise thou buryest former, so thou preventest future mercies, for thankfulness for by-past favours, is a secret craving of more, but God will not trust thee with what thou wantest, unless thou be thankful for what thou hast. Therefore rouse up thy dull heart to this great and sweet duty, as *David*, Psal. 103. 1, 2, 3. and study what to render to the Lord for all his kindnesses, *Psal.* 116. 13.

Psal. 85. 8.

2. Unfruitfulness, unsuitableness: when God's favours have been showred down upon us plentifully, how barren are our hearts? how apt are we to return into folly after peace spoken? It is sad that any should sin against God, but the more kindness God expresseth to any, the greater aggravation of sin. Hence it is, that the sins of God's people are so great, that God saith, *Jer.* 2. 30. The Children of *Judah* have only done evil before me, they only have provoked me to anger; as if the world

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beside were comparatively innocent. For besides that the gracious soul sins against greater professions and engagements on our part, so against the greatest

1. Advantages. And

2. Obligations laid upon us by God.

The principles God planted in the Saints hearts is a fruit of divine favour, and a great help against sin, and to sin against that doth aggravate sin, oh, to sin against an enlightened mind, renewed will, sanctified affections, awakened conscience, and a divine nature, renders the sin more grievous, and sinners case more dangerous, at least in his own apprehension upon a through Conviction; thus *David* aggravates his sin, *Psal.* 51. 6. *In the hidden parts thou hast made me to know wisdom*: therefore this sin is worse in me than another that wanteth such a corrective principle to restrain sin, and promote the contrary holiness.

2. God's peoples sins are committed against the greatest, most endearing obligations that God lay on us, both as to light and love, mercies and means of Grace, God accents his *Israel's* sin from special kindness, *Hos.* 11. 4. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, c.* 7. 13. 15. 8. 12. *Jer.* 31. 32. *Which my covenant they brake, although I was an Husband to them*: there's a great emphasis in that: see also *Isai.* 5. 4. *Jer.* 2. 2.—5. *Mic.* 6. 3. 4. Other mens sins anger God, the sins of God's people grieve and vex him, because he made account they would behave themselves after another manner: *Isai.* 63. 8, 9, 10. Yea, God complains of his own children,

children, that he is broken with their whorish heart, and pressed down as a Cart pressed with sheaves, and indeed it runs to a man's heart when a Child, or Friend, or a Wife, upon whom he hath heaped many kindneſſes shall carry baſely, diſingenuouſly to him, when as he may

Ezek. 6. 9.  
Amos 2. 9.  
13.

Pſal. 55. 11.

12.

ſay as *David*, if it had been an Enemy I might have born it, and as *Cæſar* ſaid, [*ὅτι σὺ τέκνον*] *What, thou my Son, to liſt up thy heel to deſpiſe, and thy hand to ſtrike me, I take it worſe from thee than from any other.* So may God ſay, what my Son, my Child, upon whom I have conferred ſo many favours, whom I have taken into ſo near relation with my ſelf, whom I have effectually called, ſanctified, to whom I have forgiven ſo many, and ſo great ſins, on whom I have conferred ſo many honours, with whom I have been ſo familiar, by whom I expected ſo much Glory, in whom I have taken ſo much content; oh that thou, even thou ſhouldeſt deal after this manner to break my laws, grieve my ſpirit, diſhonour my name, abuſe my favours; oh this runs to my heart, I know not how to bear it, if it were a wicked man I could be avenged on him in another world, I could eaſe me of my Adverſaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies, I can tell how to come even with them; but for you my children I have an everlaſting kindneſs for you, my deſign is to ſave your ſouls, and you put me to it to know what courſe to take with you, which puts me upon an *Oh Ephraim, what ſhall I do unto thee? oh Judah what ſhall I do unto thee?* I have tryed gentle means, and ſought to win the love and

Iſaa. 1. 24.

Hof. 6. 4.

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kindness, I see it will not do, my lenity is abused, my love is slighted, thou art hardened, I must take another course, I will do my strange work, to which I am so averse, I will now use severity, behold I will melt them, and try them, for how shall I do for the daughter of my people, I must not lose my Children, and I see fair means will not bring them in, I must use sharper arguments, that may pinch and non-plus them, and drive them to straits, that they may not know what other course to take; but to run to me for shelter. And all this is in covenant-faithfulness, and pursuance of God's gracious designs of good to souls, as he saith, *Hos. 2.6. Therefore I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths.* This is love and favour, for it is far better be pricked with thorns to keep in the right way, than wander into dangerous pit-falls by easie ways in an uninterrupted course. Ah, soul, thou that hast abused God's favours, mayst thank thy self for the rods, yea, and thank God that he will take the pains to whip thee, rather than suffer thee to go on to abuse his Favours.

Jer. 9.7.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XI.

**A** Third use of this point is of Examination, is it so, that God's favour is a Christian's life, *In thy favour is life*: then it becomes us all to try whether we be in God's favour or no. Oh that this were well cleared up to all our hearts. You'll say, how shall I know that I am in God's favour; I shall ask you four main questions, and desire you to search your hearts for an answer.

1. *Hath the sense of God's anger been thy death?* Have your souls been laid under deep convictions that God is angry with you, that his anger is just, that God is angry for sin? and have you searched for what sin God is angry? Have your hearts been deeply afflicted with that sin? hath the guilt of sin lain upon your conscience, as an intolerable weight? Hast thou cryed out with *Isaiah*, *We is me, I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips*? c. 6. 5. Have thy bones been broken with penitent *David*? Have God's Arrows stuck fast in thee? is there no soundness in thy flesh, because of God's anger, nor rest in thy bones, because of thy sin? hast thou even roared by reason of the disquietness of thy spirit: *Psal.* 38. 1. to 11. Hast thou ever complained under the guilt of sin and God's wrath, as a soul weary, heavy-laden? What sayest thou foul, hast thou ever with holy *Job* felt the Arrows of the Almighty within thee, and

*Psal.* 51.

*Psal.* 39. 10,  
11, 12.

*Job* 6. 4.

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and the poison thereof drinking up thy spirits? have the terrors of God set themselves in array against thee? hast thou been pricked at the heart under the guilt of sin, as the Jews, or with holy *Paul* hast thou found the commandment to be unto death? hast thou been slain in thy comforts, hopes, helps, under the sense of guiltiness? Ah, soul, thou didst never feel favour, till thou hast felt terror: the Law is our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, sense of wrath in some degree usually precedes sense of love, thou must sail from earth to Heaven in the port of Hell, sin must be bitter before Christ will be sweet to thee: thou wilt never know the benefit of God's favour, till thou hast lain under the sense of his anger, both in first conversion, and oftentimes in after desertions, as *He-man* and others of God's Children have had experience: yet with all this, the poor soul under all this displeasure, dare not but justify God, and condemn himself, if God should cast him into Hell and eternal confusion, and still confesseth that God punisheth him less than his iniquities deserve, and looks upon it as the Lord's mercy that he is not consumed, and were it not that Hell consists in the want of God's favour, and a necessity of sin, and blaspheming God's name, otherwise the soul willingly subjects it self to what punishment the Lord shall think fit to inflict upon him, that God may have the Glory of his vindictive Justice; however the soul looks upon himself as deserving it, and therefore judgeth it self worthy of death, and must stop his mouth for ever, if God should cast him in-

A<sup>g</sup>. 2. 34.Rom. 7. 5.  
10.Psal. 88.  
15, 16.

Psal. 1. 4.

Ezra 9. 13.  
Lam. 3. 21.1 Cor. 11.  
31.  
Rom 3. 19.

to Hell. Oh, saith the poor convinced soul, what a dreadful malignity is there in sin, that abominable thing which God's soul hates, that prodigious, infinite, endless evil that is in every sin! it strikes at God's Glory and Being dishonours his name, crucifies Christ, grieves the spirit, robs me of God's favour, darkens the Sun, corrupts the air, damns souls, woe to me, what will become of me, my soul is in danger by reason of the Lord's anger.

*Art thou convinced that the whole world cannot restore thee to God's favour?* Alas, all the Angels in Heaven, all the men on earth, all creature-comforts, or created accomplishment and endeavours cannot by any means reduce the soul into the favour of God, no Graces Duties, actings, can reconcile the soul to God or conciliate God's favour. Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl? Will the fruit of our brain or body atone for the sins of our souls? No, no, when poor creatures have offended God, will he take a Bullock out of their House, or He-goat out of their Fold? No, no, he desires not Sacrifice. Well then, can the holy men in earth or in Heaven interpose? No, though a *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, though a *Lot*, a *Moses* and *Samuel* should stand up to speak good for an offending people, yet they cannot turn away God's wrath, or work upon God's heart to favour a people, Nay, suppose an Angel in Heaven should intercede for a sinner, he could not bring him into God's favour again, his interest with God is

Jer. 44. 4.  
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Mic. 6. 7.

Psal. 50. 9.  
10. 51. 16.

Jer. 15. 1, 2.

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Ezek. 14.  
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not sufficient to interpose betwixt an offended  
 God, and the offending soul, he chargeth the  
 Angels with folly, to which of those holy ones Job 4. 18.  
 then will men turn, for God's wrath will kill 5. 1, 2.  
 the foolish man, for all that they can do for  
 them, yea, but suppose these poor offending  
 sinners should return to God with prayers,  
 tears, groans; alas, all their sweet incense may  
 be abomination to him. But what if they fast? *Isai. 1. 13;*  
 If they do, yet God will not hear their cry. *15.*  
 Yea, but suppose they reform their lives, o- *Jer. 14. 12.*  
 bey God's commands, live holily? that is good,  
 and absolutely necessary, yet that will not make  
 God amends, pacific wrath, or purchase re-  
 conciliation with God: no, no, they that are *Rom. 8. 8.*  
 in the flesh cannot please God; yea, though *Isa. 64. 6.*  
 the soul be converted, and in a state of Grace,  
 yet their best righteousness is but defective, and *Heb. 11. 6.*  
 but as filthy rags, and without faith in Christ  
 the mediator it is impossible to please God.  
 A poor soul is convinced, that if all the holiness  
 of all the Saints in Heaven and earth centered  
 in one soul, it could not make satisfaction to  
 justice for the least sin, for sin is in a sort infi-  
 nite, because the object offended is infinite,  
 therefore the satisfaction must be commensu-  
 rate to the evil that is in sin, and the infiniteness  
 of God; God is a consuming fire to souls out  
 of Christ, the soul dare not approach God, but *Eph. 1. 6.*  
 through a Mediatour, we are accepted only in  
 the Beloved, God is well pleased no way but *Matth. 17.*  
 in his beloved Son, he treats not friendly with  
 sinners any way but over the Mercy-seat, there *Exo 30. 6.*  
 is no intercourse with God in an amicable way *Deut. 5.*  
 5. 29.

without a Mediator. Alas, saith the soul, I am born out of God's favour, thus have lived, thus must die, except infinite mercy pity me, and I see as God is infinite in mercy, so in justice, and justice must be satisfied, and I see nothing in the whole creation that can satisfy it, all the creatures are insignificant cyphers, my own righteousness is a covering too narrow to wrap my self in, or to secure my naked soul from the lashes of sin-revenging Justice, what course must I take? what means must I use to be ingratiated in the favour of God, or to be delivered from the wrath to come?

3. *Hast thou made it thy main business to get an interest in Jesus Christ?* And indeed this is the only way of accommodation: suppose a King is offended with his Subjects, and he hath declared that there is no way of reconciliation with him, but making use of his Son to mediate for them, if those Subjects prize their Sovereign's favour, they will make use of the means he hath prescribed to regain it. Thus we find, *Act. 12. 20. Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon, but they came with one accord to him, and having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace, because their country was nourished by the king's country.* The case is ours, God is displeased with sinners, we cannot subsist here, nor be happy in Heaven without the King of Heavens Favour, it becomes us to sue for peace, but no peace can be had, except the Lord Jesus (our Heavenly Blastus) be our Friend to mediate for us, and the way of interest, in Christ is faith alone, Christ's satisfaction and intercession

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soul, I hath smoothed the brows, and quenched the  
 re lived. wrath of God Almighty, and rendred God ap-  
 pity me, proachable by sinners, he is the way, the truth  
 , so in and life, he delivers from the wrath to come,  
 nd I see he makes peace by the Blood of his Cross, he  
 r satisfie alone brings us to God. God saith to us, as Je-  
 cyphers, *soph* to his Brethren, *You shall not see my face except*  
 oo nar- *you bring your Brother*. Now the old man hin-  
 y naked ders our closing with Christ, yet the poor soul  
 Justice, wants supplies, and dare not go without Jesus  
 must I Christ, oh what contests and strugglings is there  
 God, or to get hold of Christ Jesus. One while the  
 ? poor soul is as *John* weeping, sadly weeping,  
 o get a because there is none in his view found to open  
 is is the the sealed Book, and interpret what is in the  
 King is Lord's heart towards sinners; but when he is  
 declared satisfied that Jesus Christ the Lion of the Tribe  
 ith him, of *Judah* hath prevailed, these despairing tears  
 or them, are wiped off his cloudy face, and the soul con-  
 favour, ceives some hopes, just as *Elihu* describes it in  
 ath pre- *Job* 33. 19. *He is chastened with pain upon his bed,*  
 t. 12. 20. *and the multitude of his bones with strong pain:*  
 yre an- and so on to v. 24. At last when the ransom  
 , and ha- is found- then v. 26. *He shall pray unto God, and*  
 r friend- *he will be favourable unto him, and he will see his*  
 rished by face with joy—This indeed is the only way of  
 God is obtaining favour with God, we shall behold  
 sit here, God's pleasant face in the face of Jesus  
 King of Christ. Let men mock on, saith the poor soul,  
 r peace, this is my only way for God's favour, but my  
 ed Jesus only care is to get a Title to Christ, this the  
 o medi- word tells me is by believing, oh that I had this  
 Christ is faith! Lord, begin and carry on the work of  
 rcession faith with power, farewell all for Christ; I  
 hath

John 1. 5.  
 1 Thes. 1. 10.  
 Col. 1. 20.  
 1 Pet. 1. 18.  
 Gen. 43. 3.

Rev. 5. 4, 5.

2 Cor. 4. 5.

Phil. 3. 8. count all things but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, let all go, riches, honours, the friendship of the world, and favour of dearest Relations for Christ, I will venture upon the displeasure of men, I must have God's favour, whose favour soever I lose, therefore must have blessed Jesus, he is the chiefest of ten thousand. But a carnal heart loves the favour of men more than God's, as the Pharisees of old, *John* 12. 43.

4. *What are God's carriages towards thee, and thy behaviour towards God?* This mutual reciprocal behaviour will be the best discovery of favour, as it is amongst friends.

1. For God's carriage towards thee, observe,

1. Doth not God's word single thee out by Conviction? When thou hast read a Chapter, or heard a Sermon, hath not the spirit of God set it home upon thy conscience, as if he had called thee by name, saying, thou art the man? So that as the unlearned Corinthian thou hast fallen down, and said, God is in this Ordinance of a truth. This hath set thy soul a trembling under the word, and it followed thee, and would not suffer thee to rest in sin, till it awakened thy conscience, and shaked thee out of security; though this was sharp, yet bless God for it, as a sweet fruit of his favour.

2. Doth thou not find some gracious workings of God's spirit in secret duties, as prayer, meditation, self-examination? doth not God's spirit draw out faith, love, repentance, desires? Doth it not sometimes help thy infirmities with sighs

1 Cor. 14.  
24, 25.

Ro. 8. 26.

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sighs and groans that cannot be expressed? None can tell what warmings, meltings, and quickenings there are at some seasons in thy heart, God knows the meaning of his spirit within thee. Oh, whence proceed all these operations? surely not from flesh and blood, nature could not stir up thy heart in this sort.

3. Doth not God's spirit open thy eyes to behold, and raise thy heart to affect the ways of God? Is not Religion in its most disadvantageous dress to flesh and blood, most lovely in thy eyes as it was in *Moses's*? hath not the Lord ravished thy heart with the beauty of wisdom's ways? hath not wisdom entred into thy heart, and knowledge been sweet to thy soul? hast thou not found more spiritual acquaintance with Gospel mysteries, and more real content in holy Duties, so that it may be said, *Flesh and blood have not revealed these things to thee, but the Father which is in heaven*, Matth. 16. 17. Heb. 11. 26.  
Prov. 3: 14.  
2. 10.

4. Dost thou not find sometimes a comfortable return of thy poor prayers? Canst thou not say, that some mercies that God hath given in hath this stamp upon them, Prayer answered? so that thou canst truly call them *Samuels*, i. e. God's hearing: *Psal. 34. 4. I sought the Lord, and he heard me.* And this answer of prayer is a clear evidence that God is with us, *Psal. 56. 9.* When God prepares the heart, and bows his ear, is not that a great token of his special favour, *Psal. 10. 17.*

5. Hath not preventing grace seasonably slept in to keep thy soul from sin? Just as thou hast been entring upon temptation, upon the

Ps. 121. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

6. Hath not assisting grace come in with secret and seasonable supports, according to the promise, my grace shall be sufficient for thee? and according to David's experience, Psal. 124. 4. *In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthened me with strength in my soul?* How many a time was the Lord ready to save thee when thy heart was fainting, flesh failing? oh what seasonable and satisfying incomes have fetched thee again to life, surely there was rich favour in these.

7. Hath not God by his spirit sometime sealed his love to thy soul? Look into thy heart, look back upon experience, is there never a love-token? Hath not God's spirit brought its own evidence along with it, and put thy soul out of doubt, as if thou hadst heard an audible voice, saying, I have loved thee, saith Jehovah, what saist thou? Though thou canst not expect immediate Revelations, yet hast thou not been satisfied of these divine susurrations and whisperings to thy heart, the spirits witnessing or sealing, especially considering

1. That his favour came in the way of a promise, this token of love was lapped in the word, Psal. 119. 65. *Thou hast dealt well with thy servant according to thy word.*

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2. Conveyed to thy soul in duties after many prayers, tears, repentings, actings of faith, when the soul hath been digging in the valley of *Bacah*, or weeping, God's rain of love fills the Pools, and so makes it a valley of *Beracah*, or blessing, *Psal.* 84. 6.

3. The sense of God's favour comes in suitably and seasonably, when thou wast at the last cast, and wast saying, 'Will he be favourable no more, is his mercy clean gone for ever—hath God forgotten to be gracious—then comes in some help which makes thee say, this is my infirmity, See *Psal.* 77. 7, 8, 9, 10.

4. The effects of God's favour do evidence whence it proceeds; for as it's said of the King's favour, *Prov.* 19. 12. *It is as the dew upon the grass*: even so this favour of God makes souls fruitful, what kindly operations hath it upon the heart? These warm beams of divine love have blessed influences upon the heart.

This leads me to the second Head :

What is thy behaviour towards God?

1. Under these manifestations of God's favour. And

2. In the general course of thy life?

1. When God manifests his favour to thee,

1. Dost thou carefully welcome and hoard up the evidences of his love? Our Friends tokens of love we lay up among our chief Treasures; sealed Deeds are boxed up, that they may not be broken; we highly value the least expression of our Friends love, yea, we value our selves according to our Friends respects to us, *Gen.* 8. 10. *Then was I in his eyes as one that*  
found

*found favour.* Is it thus with thy soul? Dost thou prize God's loving kindness above life itself? *Psal. 63. 3.*

2. Art thou truly afraid of losing God's favour? Dost charge thine own heart and others, that they stir not up, nor awake thy Beloved, as the *Cant. 2. 7.* Dost thou feel workings of heart, as *Ezra, chap. 9. 8, 14.* after favour and grace received? Dost thou maintain thy spiritual watch? Dost thou act an holy jealousy of thy self and estate, lest the Lord withdraw?

3. Dost thou draw out, and make spiritual use of the sense of God's favour, to thy own good, for others advantage? How doth God help thee to recollect experience, and say as *David, Psal. 42. 6.* *O my God, my soul is cast down within me, therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, from the hill of Missar, &c. i. e.* I will recollect experiences of thy goodness and favours for mercy, so for others, *Psal. 66. 16.* *Come all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul.*

4. Do not these favours make thy soul long for favours in God's immediate presence in Heaven, where thou shalt be above danger of offending him, or of losing his presence? Doth not thy soul long for, and love Christ's appearing? O when shall my soul be with God? How long shall I dwell in *Meshech*, and sojourn in the Tents of *Kedar*, when shall I be in his presence, where there is fulness of joys, when shall I be satisfied with his likeness? Oh those joys, those comforts, that light of the King's countenance

2 Tim. 4. 8.

Psal. 16. 11.

17. 15.

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countenance wherein is life, true life, lasting life, if God's favour be so sweet here only in reflection, oh what will be the full vision of God in Glory? when I shall see his blessed beautiful face, not only through a Glass darkly, but face to face, and know as also I am known. Oh blessed day! oh welcome day! when shall that day dawn? when shall my soul take her flight above yonder Sun, Moon and Stars, into my Saviour's presence, where there will be no need of then, neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the Glory of God doth lighten that City, and the Lamb is the Light thereof. Oh, blessed day, oh happy state, oh secure and sweet place!

1 Cor. 13.  
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Rev. 21. 23.

2. What is thy behaviour God-wards in the general course of thy life? for if God have a favour to thee, it is evident by thy duty towards God, both in the frame of thy spirit, and in thy conversation, for this is a rule, you may discern the workings of God's heart towards you by the motions of your hearts towards God. Well then, let me ask thee these questions, I can but briefly propound them, and leave them to your meditations.

1. Art thou afraid of doing any thing that may provoke the Lord? yea, thou therefore hatest all sin because it is offensive to God, and sayst, *How shall I do this wickedness, and sin against God?* Away with occasions of sin, God forbid I should ever meddle with sin again, not because it is destructive to me, but offensive to God, nor only as provoking God's wrath, but

Gen. 39. 9.

as

Hol. 3. 5. as grieving his spirit. Thus the soul fears the Lord and his goodness.

2. Dost thou dayly walk in all ways of well-pleasing to God, keeping close to his commands, yielding to the motions of his blessed spirit, resolving upon new obedience, with full purpose of heart-cleaving to the Lord.

Acts 11. 23. Is it not thy main care and prayer that thou mayst walk worthy of him to all pleasing?

Col. 1. 10. Thou dost not matter for pleasing of men, so thou mayst approve thy heart to God herein,

Gal. 1. 10. exercising thy self to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man.

Act. 24. 15.

3. Dost thou make it thy work to attend upon him where he is wont to distribute his favours, especially in all publick Ordinances, hearing the Word, Prayer, the Seals of the Covenant? Dost thou make it thy business to enjoy God? Thou art grieved when thou missest an opportunity of enjoying God, yea, thou makest this thy business in all duties to seek and see God's face; *Psal. 27. 4, 8, 9.*

Is not thy soul troubled when God withdraws from thee the sense of his favour? When thou hast provoked him, and he goeth, doth not thy soul fail? art thou not sick of love? how dost thou take it? dost thou carry as *Esau*, when he had sold his Birth-right, that eat and drank, and rose up, and went away? or dost thou lay it deeply to heart, languish, faint, and art filled with anguish and pain, canst rest no where, till God's favour be regained. This is a child-like frame.

Can. 5. 4, 5. Gen. 25. 34.

5. Hast thou not a favour for all those that God

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God favours? dost thou not highly prize, and dearly love the Saints that are excellent in the earth, in whom is all thy delight? dost thou not honour them that fear the Lord? Thou couldst indeed put these in thy bosom, not because they are outwardly lovely by reason of external accomplishments, or because they are of thy judgment, but because the Image of God is upon them, Grace is in their hearts, therefore they are lovely in thine eyes. Psal. 16. 3.  
1 John 3. 13, 14.

6. Dost thou feel the body of sin within thee thy greatest burden? Where are thy groans under it, thy griefs for it? art thou weary with it, striving against it? dost thou cry out daily with *Paul, Who shall deliver me?* Art thou still casting off every weight, and this sin that so easily besets thee? art thou still purifying thyself as he is pure? dost thou look at holiness as thy great happiness? what care dost thou take to promote sanctification? Ro. 7. 24.  
Heb. 12. 1.  
1 John 3. 3.

7. Dost thou love God, though thou know not whether he love thee or no? dost thou believe in him, though thou feel him not by sense and experience? nay, dost thou follow him as the poor woman, though he seem to flee from thee? yea, and more dost thou run to him, though he seem to fight with thee? Have him thou must, thou canst not be put off with repulses, thy soul followeth hard after him, and his right hand upholds thee therein. This love to God is an evidence that God loves thee: 1 Pet. 1. 8.  
Mat. 14. 23.  
Job 13. 15.  
Psal. 63. 8. *1 Cor.* 8. 3.

## C H A P. XII.

4. **U**Se is of Instruction, and Exhortation, wherein I shall press some things upon two sorts :

As { 1. Sinners.  
2. Saints.

1. To poor graceless Sinners that are out of God's favour, have no title to it, shall have no everlasting benefit by it, but wear out a few days under the common fruits of general bounty, consider

1. Methinks God's common favours should engage your hearts to look after special love, if God be so good to the worst, surely he will be much better to the good, if he give such large crumbs to Dogs, he hath better portions for Children. Doth he make his Sun to shine upon just and unjust promiscuously ? surely there is a brighter Sun of his Love shines on them that fear him. If Heathens have rain from Heaven, and fruitful seasons, if he fill their hearts with food and gladness, then he will drop down soul-refreshing influences into the hearts of his dear people, and much more refresh their hearts with distinguishing love, and can you content your selves with the former when better may be had ? Can you be content with Health, Wealth, Honours, outward Ccomforts,

Mat. 5. 45.

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Comforts, which the great ones of the world  
 had as large a share of as you desire, yet are  
 now in Hell? Nay, rather protest with brave  
*Luther*, that you will not be put off with these  
 things. Alas, what will Gold and Silver, fair  
 Houses, costly Diet, great Attendance advan-  
 tage you when your souls are sitting upon your  
 lips, and your Heart-strings are breaking, and  
 you are summoned by death to appear in ano-  
 ther world before the great Judge? Will these  
 things procure you favour in that Court? will  
 the God of Heaven favour you for being a per-  
 son of Quality, or of Honour? No, no, you  
 must be stripped of all these things, Sirs, and  
 God will not respect the persons of men in that  
 day, the things of this life will neither satisfy,  
 sanctify, nor save. Oh think of those that  
 with *Naphthali* have been satisfied with favour,  
 and full of the outward blessings of the Lord,  
 how they have left all, and that in the midst of  
 their Heaven, and like fools have gone down to  
 Hell. Alas, Sirs, the things of this world are  
 neither suitable nor durable, it is only the fa-  
 vour of God that will stand you in stead in ano-  
 ther world, and indeed that is only good for the  
 life to come. Now in God's favour there's e-  
 ternal life, this is life eternal thus to know  
 God, this is the tree of life, the bread of life,  
 living waters: nay this favour of God will  
 sweeten and season all outward favours, without  
 which they will not be blessings, but accursed.  
 Oh, that by these cords of love you might be  
 drawn to God! Oh think, is not God, Christ,  
 his Spirit, pardon, peace of conscience, Heaven,  
 infinitely

Deut. 33.

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Jer. 17. 11.

Job 25. 13.

Luke 12.

21. 31.

Joh. 1. 9.

Rev. 22. 2.

Matt. 2. 2.

Hos. 14. 4.

infinitely better than Corn, Cattel, Meat, Cloaths, Friends? Doth not God shame Rebels with multitudes of common favours? Oh that I might be one of his Friends, that mercies might melt my heart, let me have such favour with God, that I may be owned in the great day.

2. Consider the wisest and holiest men on earth advise you to it, and take this course themselves, they counsel you to nothing but what they do themselves, *Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David*, all the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, Confessors, all that Cloud of Witnesses, that Army of gracious souls that are now triumphing in Glory, made this choice, and they have sped well, they scorned the favour of men, in comparison of God's, and God hath been found of them, they now enjoy the light of his countenance, and dwell in his presence. Oh, Sirs, follow you them who through faith and patience do inherit the promises. Did *David* repent of his choice for preferring the Light of God's Countenance to mens Corn, and Wine, and Oyl? Were not the Bereans more noble than others for welcoming the Word? will not high-born Spirits aspire after great things? and should not you? do not all the Saints in Heaven speak this language joyntly, follow us? would they not all conspire in this exhortation, Oh seek God's face and favour? would not damned souls in Hell, if sent to men on earth, urge this point, being

Psal. 4. 6.

Act. 17. 11.

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being from their woful experience, oh, seek  
 God's favour, or you shall be for ever banished  
 from it as we are? all God's Ministers, your  
 godly Neighbours, gracious Relations, all dy-  
 ing persons, whose eyes are at last opened, will  
 give you this counsel unanimously, if you love  
 your souls get into the favour of God. We  
 poor Ministers make it our work to study,  
 preach, travel to you, travel over you, pray  
 for you, and what's all this for, but to per-  
 swade you to be reconciled to God, if it were <sup>2Cor. 5.20.</sup>  
 possible to bring you into the favour of God?  
 Oh that we could accomplish this end, we  
 should be sufficiently rewarded; what would  
 we give to win your hearts to God? what joy  
 would be to the Friends of the Bridegroom, <sup>Joh. 3.29.</sup>  
 if the Match might be concluded, and your  
 souls married to Christ? We should think all  
 our labour well bestowed; nay, if we by our  
 death could be instruments to bring you into  
 God's favour: but what speak I of our death,  
 Christ died to accomplish it, this cost blood,  
 yea, the Blood of God. Oh, souls, shall no-  
 thing prevail with you, shall neither the exam-  
 ples of the best men, nor the prayers, tears,  
 entreaties, perswasions of your Ministers or  
 best Friends; nor the Blood of Christ, or the  
 Blood of your own immortal souls prevail with  
 you to look after God's favour? What then  
 shall we say? we have delivered our message,  
 if you be careless, your Blood be upon your  
 own head.

I

3. Consider

3. Consider how intent the men of the world are to obtain the favour of men. Many  
 Pro. 29. 16. men will entreat favour of the Prince, and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts, *Prov.* 19. 6. What running, what making friends, base compliance, and crouching to the humours of Superiours, to obtain their favour? If the poor Tenant be out of favour with his rich Landlord, what means doth he use to obtain it? and is the favour of the God of Heaven of no value with you, that can make Heaven and earth to tremble when once he is angry? that God that can frown you into Hell, and destroy you with a rebuke of his countenance.

Alas, Sirs, who would live out of his favour one hour? How dar'st thou eat and drink, and talk, and walk, and sleep, when thou art out of the favour of God? How knowest thou but God's wrath may wax hot against thee, and thou perish from the way? How canst thou tell that thou shalt be another night out of Hell? if God be thine enemy, and angry at thee, he hath hourly advantage against thee: you will say, God forbid, I hope I am in God's favour. I answer, I wish it be so, but thou wast not born so, thou art by nature a child of wrath as well as others, and the wrath of God abides still upon thee, unless taken off by Jesus Christ, and thou hast no interest in Christ without faith, and thou hast no faith by nature, nor canst thou work it in thine own heart,

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heart, and if faith be there, all other saving Graces are radically there. And art thou indeed born again, art thou translated from death to life? Hast thou passed through the pangs of the new new Birth? all men have not faith, every soul is not new born, the work is great, life and death lies upon it, the heart is deceitful, most men are mistaken in this weighty case. Will the worldly wise be at uncertainties about their estates; have they not a mind to make all as sure as they can? And do not mens practices provoke or condemn thee? Suppose the men of the world obtain their ends, what is a Princes favour to God's? *Put not your trust in Princes —* Psal. 146.  
*blessed is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help.* 3, 4, 5. What if the base man-pleasing flatterer get a little popular air, how soon may men's *Hosannas* be turn'd into *Crucifie him*? At what rates would the enamoured Lover purchase the favour of his Mistress, and when obtained, it may be, purchase nothing but sorrow? Oh, shame with your selves that you take no more pains to obtain the favour of God, and now from henceforth let the Kingdom of Heaven suffer violence, and seek for that honour that cometh from God only, the matter is of infinite concernment, even as much as your souls are worth to all eternity.

4. There is yet a possibility of obtaining God's favour. Poor sinner, thou art yet alive, out of Hell, thousands that were alive as thou art are past hope, they shall never have

offers of grace more, no terms of accommodation shall ever be propounded to them, but are banished for ever from the presence of the Lord, without hopes of ever seeing his face with comfort; this, may be, must be thy case shortly, if thou obtain not God's favour here. The Devils never had an offer of God's Favour, but those high Favourites in the Court of Heaven, upon the first transgression were cast headlong into everlasting Chains under darkness, reserved unto the Judgment of the last day; but thou hast heard the glad tidings of Salvation by Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world, the good news concerns men, *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men.* It is to you, oh men, that wisdom calls, and her voice is to the sons of men, it is you that are alive, this day to whom the word of this Salvation is sent, yet there is hope, yet (for ought we know) the door is open, we are sent to living persons, the living, the living may praise the Lord, yet the spirit of God is striving with you, yet God holds forth the golden Scepter, now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation, he hath limited it to a day, this day of life, in vain shall you sue for favour when life is gone, the foolish Virgins may stand long at the door, and knock, and cry *Lord, Lord, open to us.* When the door is shut, when the gulf is fixed, when death hath done its office, then there's no hopes, no help, the disease will be incurable, your state miserable, your souls eternally undone, wo, wo to you

Jude 6.

Luke 2. 14.

Prov. 8. 4.

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you that ever you were born, if you would give ten thousand pounds, yea, the whole world ( if it were yours to give ) alas, it were in vain, all your roarings, yellings, tortures will not move God's heart to favour you, you must be for ever separate from the presence, and from the Glory of his Power, into endless, caseless, remediless torments, where the God of Mercy will never cast a propitious eye upon you more, but as it were laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear comes upon you, for the scene of grace will be over, and justice now will act its part against rebellious and impenitent wretches for ever more. You will say, but is there any hopes ? I fear I have sinned away the day of grace, and the motions of God's spirit, woe to me !

*Ans.* Neither thou, nor I, nor any creature breathing can tell that, still God is holding thy soul in life, who knows but he may crown thee also with loving kindness and tender mercy, it may be God hath spared thee for that end thus long, who knoweth but he will return and leave a blessing behind him ? Even the poor Ninevites could thus argue, having no grounds of encouragement, who can tell if God will turn away his fierce anger. This is ground sufficient for a venture ; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, or rather, it may be he may turn away his anger, and be reconciled to you, and be favourable to your souls ; yea, be assured of it if you be sincere, in repenting

Joel 2. 14.  
Jonah 3. 9.

Zeph. 2. 3.

Toh. 6. 37.  
 18. 15.

Jer. 2. 25.  
 18. 12.

Ezra. 10. 2.  
 Jonah 2. 8.

and believing in Christ, you shall certainly be received into favour, there is no peradventure in it, such as come to him he will in no wise cast out. If poor wicked sinners forsake their way, and ungodly their thoughts, and turn to the Lord, he will have mercy upon you, he will abundantly pardon: free grace shall be magnified, your souls shall be accepted, your sins shall be pardoned, God hath said it, and will perform it. Oh, believe not Satan, and a willful heart against an infallible word of the faithful God. Say not as some forlorn miscreants thought to repent, there is no hope, no, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go, &c. it is in vain to move me to repent, I see my case is desperate, I lie under a curse and hardness of heart, God will not pardon me, to Hell I must go, I might as well take my pleasure in sinning, and be damned for something, for to the Devil I am going. Oh, horrible dreadful frame! God forbid that any should say, there is no hope at this rate; nay, there is hope in *Israel* concerning this thing. Sin not as one desperate, forsake not thine own mercies, confess thy sin, repent and give glory to God, there is mercy for the chief of sinners, *Paul* is a pattern, *Manassah* an instance, *Mary Magdalen* a lively example. Oh, kick not against his warm bowels, despise not the riches of his grace, scorn not his favours, let God's loving-kindness lead thee to repentance, let hopes of acceptance be thy encouragement. When a Pirate at Sea, or Rebel at Land have no hopes of their

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Prince's favour, they grow desperate; but a Proclamation of loving Reception, yea, a promise of preferment melts their hearts into submission; oh, that Gospel offers might have the like efficacy upon your hearts! make a trial, put God to it, see whether he will be as good as his word; the report of his merciful nature methinks should make you say as *Benhadad's servants* Behold, now we have heard that the *king of Israel is a merciful king*, let us put sackcloth upon our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel, peradventure he will save our lives: the life of our precious souls. Nay, you have better assurance than they had, for the Lord our God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him: *2 Chron. 30. 7.* You will say I am very desirous of God's favour; but how shall I do to obtain it, what means must I use to get into the favour of God? I answer, think not that you can procure God's favour, or purchase it with your endeavours, nor work your self into it by your duties or obedience, his love is free, yet he hath appointed ways for his poor creatures to use as means, which he sets them upon in order to the obtaining and enjoying of this mercy, and they are such as these briefly.

1. Serious Self-reflection. When God intends good to a soul, he engageth it to look into his own heart and state to consider his ways, to commune with his heart. There are

four reflections I entreat you to make upon your selves.

Gal 5.4.  
2 Cor 13.5.

1. Whether am I in God's favour, yea or no? oh I have need to get this case of conscience well resolved upon Scripture grounds, every one doth not partake of this special favour of God, nor I by nature, for I am a child of wrath as I come into this world, am I changed, is my soul converted? what fruits of God's special love can I experience in my soul? oh, that I could prove my work, prove my state whether I be in Christ, and Christ in me or no. I must know off or on, uncertainties will not serve my turn, loth I am to be deceived in a matter of so great moment.

2. What if I be out of God's favour? oh fearful state, wo is me, it had been better I had never been born, I am as sure to be damned, as God is true, if I live and die so, and I may die this night, I know not but I may be in Hell before morning, wo is me if I be not in God's favour, I am a Bond-slave to Satan, an enemy to God, God to me, then all the creatures are my enemies, I am worse than the Beasts, comparatively happy were I, if I could die as a Dog or Horse, wo is me, my soul is going into eternity, and I know not whither, but certain I am, I can never be happy in this, or in another world but by and in the favour of God.

3. How came it to pass, that my soul lost God's favour? what are the grounds of the quarrel? whence came this distance and difference

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rence betwixt the great God, and my poor soul? *Adam* was in favour, but lost it by sinning against God, in eating of the forbidden fruit, here was the controversie first commenced, and I am guilty of that sin, and have ever since I was born followed that bad example, walked in the same steps, and so widened the difference; sin is only the Make-bate between God and my soul, it is that abominable thing that hides his face, provokes his wrath, and will separate my soul from God for ever. Oh what a wretched Villain am I by reason of sin! oh that my soul could lay it deeply to heart, as that which hath done me so much injury!

4. What can I do to make God amends? will prayers, tears, labours, diligence in duties, resolution of obedience, pacifie or please the Lord? will sufferings and sorrow quench the fire of God's anger? Oh, no, there is no created being whatsoever can make up this breach: if I could perfectly keep the Law, and offend in no tittle, in thought, word or deed, that will not do it: performing a new duty, is no paying an old debt, if I should lie in Hell for ever, that endless punishment upon a finite creature will not satisfy infinite justice; and therefore its endless torments for the least offence, therefore the utmost farthing cannot be paid, wo is me, is there no remedy? yes, the Gospel propounds one, and that is Jesus Christ.

2. Sound-hearted faith in Christ. When ever poor sinners are brought into God's favour

your, that is the next work God works by his spirit, viz. to beget a Gospel-faith, and this God doth

1. By engaging the poor sinners to a diligent attendance upon the word preached, for faith comes by hearing : as this is a great and need-ful duty, so it is a condition which God hath made promises too, *Hear, and your souls shall live.* It is God's way and walk into which he brings that sinner usually whom he is pleased to touch, be sure then thou watch daily at his Gates, waiting at the posts of his doors, turn not thy back upon God's appointment, attend the most plain and piercing Ministry, it is the power of God to salvation, who knows but God may drop down his spirit in the hearing of faith? This is the method of his Grace, first to reconcile them to the Ordinances, and so by them to himself.

2. To make the poor soul mind the word spoken, the sinner was wont to put off truths as impertinent, or inconsiderable, but now a conviction is fastened, and the poor hearts being nailed to truths, cannot but confess that God is in his word of a truth. Oh, that at last you would consider, and take home a word of conviction, that you would not despise prophesying, nor quench the spirit! if God aim you good, he will pierce and prick, and break your hearts, and make you solicitous about salvation, and cry out, What shall I do to be saved; soul concerns shall be a leading matter in your thoughts, and then you go in the Road to further good.

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3. To open the eyes to see the further nature of true justifying faith, that it is not such a dead heartless thing as it is ordinarily taken to be: and that faith that the soul imagined it had, is not the faith of God's elect, and that the soul hath not indeed a Gospel-faith, never did savingly believe, yet must necessarily have that faith, or be damned for ever. This is that which the Scripture assigns to be one work of the spirit, *John* 16. 8, 9. That the spirit shall convince the world of sin: what sin? because they believe not on me. Oh, Sirs, that you would study your faithless state! Think with thy self that faith that will bring me off at the great day, must not be a faith of my own coining, but God's stamping; and alas, did I ever see the want of this! have I been convinced of the difficulty of believing and its necessity? what a sad thing will it be, if I go to the grave with a presumption, instead of a sound faith! I see, I see I have been deluded with Satan's brat, rather than the genuine fruit of God's spirit, oh, what shall I do for a grain of saving faith?

4. To engage the poor guilty sinner to struggle with his own heart in the work of believing. Oh, that I could believe! oh that my heart were knit to Christ! fain would I accept of Christ, but I am beaten off, Satan and my own heart oppose it, I am like a man swimming against the stream, running up the hill, I am just laying hold, but beat off again: I cry as the poor man in the Gospel, *Lord, I believe, help* Mar. 9. 24.]

*help thou my unbelief*: yet I will not leave my hold, guilt makes me look on God as a killing enemy; yet I will say with *Job*, *Though he kill me, yet I will trust in him*. I have no whither else to go, no course else to take, Christ I must have, or I am undone for ever; Christ's person, as God and man, in the fruit of both estates, humiliation and exaltation, in all his Offices, Prophet, Priest, King, Christ's merit to satisfy, and Spirit to sanctify, I will quit all things for him, it is the King's Son only that can bring my soul into favour with God: *Prov. 8. 35*. Who so findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. If the Lord Jesus were mine, saith the soul, I question not but I should obtain favour with God, his Blood is the atonement, he is the Propitiation for sins, I must come to God by him, as the true Ladder of *Jacob*. Alas, what shall I do? this heavy foot of mine will not step upon this Ladder, this Palsy Hand will not lay hold on him, Lord, lift up my foot to come to Christ, strengthen my hand to receive him.

I shall briefly touch the other means of enjoying God's favour, which are,

3. Self-resignation to God. Give up your selves to God in covenant, nothing can please you but God himself, nothing can please God but your selves, offer up *your bodies as a living sacrifice* (instead of the bodies of dead Beasts under the Law) *holy* (instead of carnal Ordinances) *reasonable* (instead of unreasonable Bruits)

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bruits) and this shall be acceptable to God:  
*Rom. 12. 1.* If you vow your selves as a free-  
 will offering to the Lord, he will graciously ac-  
 cept of your dedication, and smile upon you in  
 Christ. Study his word, understand the terms  
 of the Covenant, accept voluntarily of those  
 conditions, take his yoke upon you, put your  
 necks under that easie yoke, and look upon it  
 as your ease and pleasure, honour and orna-  
 ment. First, give up your selves to the Lord, *2 Cor. 8. 5.*  
 and then to his Ministers by the will of God, *c. 9. 13.*  
 then be ready to profess your subjection to the  
 Gospel of Christ, be ready to say I am the  
 Lord's, call your selves by the name of *Jacob*,  
 subscribe with your hand to the Lord, and fir-  
 name your selves by the name of *Israel, Isai. 44. 5.*  
 Be ready to give any pledges and testimonies of  
 your fidelity, in troth-plighting to be the  
 Lord's bored servants for ever, give all the  
 members of thy body, and faculties of thy soul  
 to seek for wisdom, receive his words, hide his  
 commandments with thee, incline thy ear to  
 wisdom, apply thy heart to understanding, lift  
 up thy voice, cry, seek as for silver, then shalt  
 thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find  
 the knowledge of God; for the Scripture  
 saith, *He that diligently seeketh God, procureth*  
*favour, Prov. 11. 27. i. e.* he that gives up him-  
 self to God in the way of his appointments,  
 shall enjoy favour in the eyes of God and men:  
*Prov. 12. 2. A good man obtaineth favour of the*  
*Lord.* Make it thy business to walk with God,  
 watch over thy heart, mortifie lusts, exercise  
 graces,

*Prov. 3. 1,*  
*2, 3, 4, 5.*

graces, perform duties, do all the good, avoid all the evil thou canst, and see what the effect will be: *Prov. 14. 3. Among the righteous there is favour.* Favour towards God, favour in God towards them: for thou Lord, wilt bless the righteous, with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.

4. Earnest prayer and supplication. *Psal. 119. 58. I entreated thy favour with my whole heart:* it is worth seeking, his favour is worth begging, oh plead hard for it, be not put off without it; speak such language as this in thy heart or lips. Lord, here I am a poor forlorn wretch, a guilty sinner; once the first man *Adam* in my nature was in thy favour, as one of the Courtiers of Heaven, he walked all the day of his innocency in the light of thy countenance; but alas, he fell, offended thy Majesty, proved a Traitor, lost thy favour, and we in him, by breaking thy Laws, and now poor man, wretched mankind is banished from the Palace of the Prince's presence, into a dungeon of darkness, to lie and die in the shades of sin, guilt, wrath and endless despair, and so to be thrust into everlasting torments, and if thou give me my due, thou mayst justly banish me amongst Devils and damned spirits for ever: but, Lord, though I deserve no favour, Jesus Christ doth, he drunk of the Brook in the way, he made a passage to thy self by a new and living way, the Sun of Righteousness is risen, hath banished the Shades of gloomy darkness caused  
by



by God's displeasure, hath brought life and immortality to light, hath removed the frowns out of the face of God, that poor sinners may behold him in the face of Jesus Christ, through the tender mercy of our God, the Day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

Lord, smile upon this poor sinner through thy Son, oh; for one beam of the Sun of Righteousness! Lord, that my soul may be accepted in the Beloved, cast one eye of pity upon a poor sinner, let thy bowels of compassion earn towards thy creature in misery, and express to me some fruits of thy grace, make me lovely and amiable in thy sight, put thy comeliness upon me, and then take delight in me as thy child. Luke 1. 78, 79.

and though thou canst see nothing in me worthy acceptance, yet when thou hast adorned me with thine Image and Graces, thou wilt have a favour to the works of thy hands, thou hast a love, not only of pity, but of complacency to some of thy creatures, and why not to me? Sun of Righteousness, shine upon me, Lord, speak comfortably to thy servant, many are a terrour to me, Satan affrights me, the world hates me, my conscience condemns me, but be not thou a terrour to me, thou art my hope in the day of evil, Lord, I am not fit to come into thy presence, for I am both filthy and guilty, yet have mercy upon me according to thy loving-kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions, Jer. 17. 17.

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Psal. 51. 1-11.

Pfal. 132.

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Matt. 3. 17.

Pfal. 106. 4.

cast my sins behind thy back, but cast not me away from thy presence, for thy servant *David's* sake (or for the Son of *David's* sake) turn not away the face of thy anointed, he is thy beloved Son in whom thou art well pleased, be well pleased with me through him, oh, favour me with the favour of thy people, visit me with thy salvation, look upon me, and be merciful unto me as thou usest to do unto those that fear thy name. *Psal.* 119-132.

# C H A P. X I I I.

**T**He second sort of persons whom this Doctrine instructs are Saints, God's own People, the sincere Professors of Religion, that have a covenant-title to, and interest in the favour of God, which indeed is the souls life. Now concerning these, there are Christians of two sorts, or sizes, or Saints under a double capacity, for some

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1. Those that want God's favour, at least the sense of it, for as *Davenant* distinguisheth of a favour of God, which he calls [*Vinculum aeternae benevolentiae*] a bond of eternal love and goodwill. This depends upon the electing Grace of God: this bond is indissoluble, cannot be lost, for whom he loves once, he loves to the end. But there is also [*Amor amicitiae*] which is the sense, use, comfort of this love and good will, this love of intimate friendship, intercourse, familiarity, this may be lost, and often is wanting, which hath made good souls cry out, as though God had forsaken them, hid his face, dealt with them as if he were their enemy, or had cast them off for ever.

Here I shall endeavour to answer unto

A Souls { 1. Objections.  
2. Cases of Conscience.

1. Objections are such as these,

1. *Obj.* Can I be in God's favour that am so unworthy of it? none so unfit.

*Ans.* 1. There is a twofold favour of God.

1. Of benevolence or beneficence, a love of good will, by which he makes worthy.

2. A love of complacency and delight, whereby he owns, accepts, entertains into his bosom, and embraces the soul that is so made worthy by sanctifying Grace. All the world is unworthy of God's favour by nature: *Rom. 3.*

10. *There is none righteous, no, not one.* Nor doth God set his love upon any for any worthiness

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in them, but because he will love them, he draws arguments out of his own bosom to do them good; but then when he hath by his Grace renewed their hearts by his spirit, then he accounts them worthy in a Gospel sense, and so favours them, that *they shall walk with him in white, for they are worthy: Rev. 3. 4.*

2. None are by the Lord judged so worthy of special favours, as those that judge themselves most unworthy. Who had more of God's special favour than *Abraham*, that is called the friend of God, yet he accounts himself dust and ashes? *Jacob* had singular respect from God, in visions of God, in answers of prayers, yet looks on himself as less than the least of God's mercies. So *David*, *Paul* that judged themselves as Beasts, less than all Saints, greatest of sinners, yet who had more revelations and manifestations of God's favour? Look through the Bible, and you shall find that God's favour descends still into Valley-grounds, and he honours them most that honour themselves least. See *Psal. 25. 14. Matth. 8. 8, 10. Luk. 7. 69. 14. 10. 11. Jam. 4. 6.*

2. *Obj.* But I am a filthy, polluted, sinful wretch, a fardel of vanity and wickedness: can God have any favour for for such a one as I am?

*Ans.* 1. You must distinguish betwixt God's having respect to sin, and having respect to souls in whom sin is; it is true, the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity:

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yea, he abhorreth the wicked, he is of purer eyes than to behold the evil, yet if God should not love where corruption is, he should have no objects of favour among the children of men. He can distinguish (though men cannot, or will not) betwixt sinners and sinners, penitent and impenitent, he knows and owns his own Image, though he hates and rejects Satan's, he hath a favour to his children, though all dirt, he respects his jewels in the mire, Christ's Spouse is at the same time both black and comely: consider the poor soul sooted with the relics of sin, oh how ugly is it? but look on the beginnings of Grace in sincerity, oh how desirable! Sin repented of, and abhorred, shall not hinder God's favour. Nay,

2. God hath greatest favour for that soul that hath least favour for himself, he had most respect to penitent *Job*, that abhors himself in dust and ashes: a self-loathing soul is a God-respected soul: *Ezek.* 16. 63. God is most pacified, when the Christian's face is most ashamed, this self-confusion is both a fruit and evidence of God's favour. See *Ezek.* 20. 41. 43—36. 25—31. When thou hast least charity for thy self, God hath most for thee; when thou art most vile in thine own eyes, thou art most fair in his: this is no small mystery, Grace vilifies a man to himself, magnifies him to God; at the same time when a man thinks himself the worst of men, God owns him as the best of men, and yet neither misseth, nor mistaketh in judging, for the souls eyes being open, he knows he is

worse than any, and God who searcheth hearts knows that by him, which he can scarce discern in himself, and through discouragement with his corrupt heart will not believe is in him, so *He that shall humble himself, shall be exalted*: Matth. 23. 12.

3. *Obj.* How can I have God's favour that feel it not, cannot experience it, know it not, believe it not? surely, it is not possible a soul should be in God's favour, and not know it?

*Ans.* 1. You must distinguish betwixt God's favour to a soul, and the sense of it in the soul, *David* complains of broken bones, of God's hiding his face, withdrawing himself, so doth *Job*, *Heman*, yea, our Saviour. Divines distinguish betwixt salvation, and the joy of this salvation: *Psal.* 51. 12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation*, the having of grace, and the feeling of grace are different things, a man in a swoon hath life, but is not sensible of it in some cases, God doth sometimes for wise ends suspend the manifestation of his favour from a gracious soul, as a Father will do from his Child, and as *Joseph* did from his Brethren.

2. This variety of soul-cases doth rather evidence God's favour to it, than the contrary, sick fits are incident only to men alive, they have child like dispositions that understand the nature of God's withdrawings, it was a *David* that could say, *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled*, true love is accompanied with many jealousies, ebbings and flowings are the companions

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companions of sea-faring men, up-hill and down is the Road to Heaven. Think not to be dandled always in God's Arms, or laid in his bosom, remember you are on earth, not in Heaven, your Sun may be often under a cloud, your mouths must not be always filled with dainties, it is natural for God's children in some cases to question God's love, graceless presumers will hardly be brought to question God's favour, are ordinarily in one uniform settled state, but go on dreaming in fools paradise; and when they question it, they silence clamorous conscience with worldly Salvos, or phantastick Delusions.

4. *Obj.* But alas, how can I think that God favours me, when I cannot love him? Is not God's love seconded with our love to him? as the genuine reflection of those lovely rays, 1 John 4. 19.

*Ans.* 1. You must distinguish betwixt the direct and the reflex actings of grace, it is one thing to act Grace on God, another to know that this is indeed the genuine acting of sincere grace, the grace of love may be hid in the Christian's heart as well as God's favour may be hid under a cloud: spiritual life may be hid [Col. 3. 3.] even from the Christian's own view, as well as from others discovery, desertions, temptations and corruptions may darken and damp a good soul's evidences of grace.

2. But look again and rake in the ashes, and see if thou canst not find some spark of love,

Rom. 5. 5.  
2 Petr. 1. 8.

feel thy pulse again, and feel it steddily, and see if it beat not sincerely, though faintly, thou wouldst lie still as a stone, if the cords of love did not draw thee, thou wouldst be as dead as a carcase if the Sun of God's favour did not quicken thee: what is not God's love shed abroad in thy heart? canst thou not love him, though absent? though unseen? But I shall wave this, as having spoken to it before.

Other Objections might be mentioned (as indeed there is no end of a jealous souls querulous complaints, when Satan raiseth hard thoughts of God in us) as this, if God hath a favour for me, why doth he not take off this affliction, or bestow upon me this or that good which I want. I answer, because he hath a favour to thee, God may deny a mercy to some in favour, and give a mercy to others in wrath, affliction is to Saints adopted to be a covenant-mercy, *Psal.* 89. 32. But God may give wicked men their own desire: *Psal.* 78. 29. and mingle that gift with wrath, *verse* 31. The Father knows what is good for the child better than the child himself, and if he give in favour, will give every good thing, *Psal.* 84. 11. A man in a Feaver would have strong drink, which will increase his Disease, but his keeper is wise: God is a faithful keeper, a merciful preserver; it is a favour that God will rather deny than gratifie our fond desires in some things, he often doth us good against our wills.

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Oh but faith the soul, if God favour me, why doth he suffer me to be hurried with such violent temptations and raging corruptions ! I answer, it is neither want of power or love in God towards his children, but for wise ends, even to make the poor souls humble and self-denying, to see a dayly need of recourse to Christ, to maintain grace in lively exercise, to keep up spiritual warfare, make the conquest more glorious, death more desirable, and Heaven more welcome.

2. Cases of Conscience are such as these.

1. *Qu.* Whether doth not faith consist in the assurance of God's favour ? I have heard some say so, and if so, I have no faith.

*Ans.* That is a mistake : assurance of God's favour is not of the essence, but a blessed effect of faith ; hence it is called the assurance of faith, *Heb.* 10. 22. There may be sincere faith without it, as many Scripture instances demonstrate : *Psal.* 22. 1.—88. 1. 14. *Isai.* 50. 10. Sealing comes after believing ; *Eph.* 1. 13. For faith consists in an assent of the mind to Gospel-revelations, and a consent of the will to take Christ upon his own terms, as he is held forth in the Gospel, *1 Tim.* 1. 15. *Joh.* 1. 2.

2. *Qu.* But how can a soul act faith on God, that wants assurance of God's favour, what ground hath he for faith ?

*Ans.* Yes, he may act faith without a particular assurance : *Joh.* 13. 15. *Psal.* 13. 1. 5.—

143. 7. 3. So the woman of *Canaan*, *Matth.* 15. 22—23. Because the ground of faith is not providences, but promises, not sense and feeling of God's special love at present, but secret support built upon revelation of God's power and willingness to save, and his gracious carriage towards others, so that a poor soul knowing his misery and necessity, and understanding God is mercy, and faithfulness, ventures it self on God in the way of believing.

3. *Qu.* What may be the reason why the Lord sometimes withdraws the sense of his favour from his children?

*Ans.* God hath many wise and gracious ends in this dispensation. A skillful Physician gives Vomits, Purges, to work out bad humours, and to beget a more healthful constitution of soul, God's Children oft grow wanton, and to provoke God to withdraw the sense of his love and favour, and God inflicts this darkness as their punishment. This was *David's* case here, God punished his carnal confidence with his withdrawing; *Psal.* 50. 7. so *Isai.* 57. 17. I might mention many gracious ends that God hath in hiding his face, for promoting the good of his children, as to awaken them out of drowsiness and security, *Cant.* 5. 3. 4.

2. To humble their hearts, and prevent pride, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7.

3. To prepare them for comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. in nature God works by contraries, so in grace he brings by hell to Heaven.

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4. Weaning their hearts from the world, to which they are too much addicted; *Psal.* 119. 36. Letters and Love tokens are oft intercepted, that we might love and long more for home.

5. Raising their hearts to a more high esteem of God's favour, quickning their diligence in seeking him, promoting their care and endeavour of holding him fast: *Camr.* 3. 1. 5.

6. That after these sad shakings, their hearts may be more fully settled and established upon better grounds: *1 Pet.* 5. 10.

7. To teach them to pity, pray for, and relieve others in that state of desertion: *Heb.* 2. 17, 18.

4. *Qu.* Or Case of Conscience is, whether is assurance of God's favour possible to be attained, and how may we obtain it?

*Answ.* This is a grave and large subject, I can but hint it, no question but assurance of God's favour is attainable; and it is a fault in those that think it is presumption to desire or seek for it. It is commanded, *2 Pet.* 1. 10. It is promised, *Ezek.* 24. 30. *Joh.* 14. 21. It hath been performed, *Rom.* 8. 15, 16. *1 John* 4. 16. The way to obtain it is not peculiar to some, but common to all Believers in all ages; for it is done by a practical syllogism, thus, He that sincerely believes, repents, loves God, is in God's favour; but, saith the soul, I sincerely believe, repent, and love God, therefore I am in God's favour. The *major* is a Scripture assertion, therefore an infallible

infallible truth : *Joh. 3. 15. Acts 3. 19. 1 John 3. 14, 18.* The *minor* is a Christian's own experience, the workings of grace in his heart : *2 Cor. 3. 15. Heb. 10. 34.* The consequence is very clear upon these premises, make out these, and the conclusion will follow roundly, therefore I am in God's favour and shall be saved.

*Q<sup>n</sup>.* Why then do so few attain assurance of God's favour ?

*Ans<sup>r</sup>.* It is difficult though possible, and few will be at the pains to use God's appointed means, or stay God's leisure for obtaining of assurance, many are ignorant, and know not how to set about self-tryal, others melancholy, and are not able to distinguish aright, or to make rational deductions, many blur their evidences by sinning, others have a defect of faith, or too much prevalency of unbelief in their hearts, are surpris'd with slavish fears and jealousies, and are apt to think it is too good news to be true, others give way to the world which interposeth between the Sun of God's favour and their souls; Satan buffets others with sad temptations, and God leaves others under desertion for gracious ends. For we must (with most Divines) distinguish betwixt a Christian's cursive assurance of God's favour, which is upon a discovery of gracious habits in the soul and actings of Grace, and that which is intuitive, *i. e.* that flows from the more immediate shinnings of God's face, or sealings of his spirit, wherein God as a free Agent vouchsafes or suspends

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suspends these tokens of love, as he sees good, and though that be a truth that God must shine upon the graces of his spirit in our hearts, or we cannot have assurance of his favour, yet usually the reason of our want of assurance is our own negligence, not using, or careless using the means for attaining thereof. If you ask me what are the ordinary means that a Christian must use for obtaining assurance of God's favour, I shall but hint at four,

1. Diligent attendance upon God's Ordinances, and look up to God in all his appointments, as hearing the word, *Psal.* 89. 15. Savoury conference, *Cant.* 3. 3. *1 Thess.* 15. 14. Earnest prayer, *John* 16. 24. but use these conscientiously and constantly, and you will see the sweet effect.

2. Solemn self-examination, it may be there is something amiss in your hearts and lives, for which God withdraws, oh search and find it out, mourn for it, get a pardon of it, and a through reconciliation, *Job* 13. 23, 24. God loves to smile upon humbled souls, *Jam.* 4. 6. 18. *2 Cor.* 7. 6. *Isai.* 57. 15.

3. Reflecting upon experience, *Psal.* 77. 5. 10. 145. 4. 5. It becomes Christians to keep a Register of God's dealings with their hearts, and when they are in the dark to look it over, *Psal.* 85. 8. and the reason is, because if ever thou wast in God's favour, thou art still in his favour: see *Jeb.* 13. 2. that is a notable Text in *Jer.* 31. 3. which some render thus, *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me*: say they (i.e. it is true

true, God formerly made many gracious discoveries of himself to our Ancestors, but now he hideth himself, and hath forsaken us ) yea, saith the Lord, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, *q. d.* it is not a transeunt or temporary favour, but from, and to all eternity, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.

4. Walking in ways well-pleasing to God, conformity of life and heart to God's will, a constant care to please God, and fear to offend him is both a mean and evidence of God's favour, *Psal.* 30. 13. *Mat.* 4. 2. *Psal.* 85. 9. It is impossible you should have a right assurance of God's favour, if you favour any sin, yea, let a godly man yield to sin, and presently the evidence of God's favour is lost and withdrawn, for sin separates betwixt a people and their God, *Isai.* 59. 2. These interpose as a thick mist to hide his face from us, if your hearts grow secure, worldly, sitting loose from God, letting down watch, or remitting diligence in duty, presently (if you be sensible) you will find God withdrawing the light of his countenance from your souls, for God will not manifest himself to those that make not conscience of close and holy walking.

2. Something I should say to those that do enjoy the sweet Sun-shine of God's favour, and feel the sense of it in their heart: I shall but briefly hint your duty.

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hadst no right to it by nature, thou did not deserve it for any thing thou hast done, thou hast often forfeited it, many thousands go out of God's blessings into the warm Sun, and willingly leave our Father's Table to feed upon Husks, most of the world besides a few Saints are willingly put off with a few scraps of worldly enjoyments. *Luther* calls the whole Turkish Empire but a crum cast to Dogs. Oh, but this is the Childrens Bread, blest God, and say as *Mephibosheth* to *David*, Who am I that the Lord should look on such a dead dog as I am, what shall I render to the Lord for this benefit, oh for a thankful heart, Lord, pardon my base ingratitude.

2. Walk worthy of this favour, lay up experiences of God's favour, as *Mary* laid up the Angels sayings in her heart, or as Friends lay uptokens of love carefully, we use to preserve deeds of moment locked up, Seals boxed up, that they may not be broken: oh, look well to evidences of God's love, they may stand you in steed, as *Thamar* produced her pledges to *Judah*, oh, but abuse not God's favour by sinning, turn not his grace into wantoness, *Hamans* abuse of *David's* kindness, you know brought forth a War, and truly God often reckons it as a matter of controversie against *Israel* of old, the abuse of his favour, see *Jer.* 2. 2. 5. 9. *Mic.* 6. 2. 5. And indeed the abusing of his love goes to his very heart, carry suitably, seeking to please, and afraid to offend him, charging your selves and others that you beware of interrupting

ing your comfort, or disturbing this repose he hath in you, *Cant. 2. 7.* Observe you are in greatest danger of falls immediately after the receipt of sweetest tokens of favour, therefore be most watchful dayly to maintain holy jealousy over your hearts that you sin not, and to provoke God to frowns.

3. Improve God's favour for the good of others, produce experiments thereof, saying, *Come all ye that fear God, and I will shew you what he hath done for my soul, Psal. 66. 16.* Speak to your Children, Servants, Neighbours and Companions, and urge them to taste and see how good the Lord is, recommend his service from your own experience, tell them how sweet you have found the light of God's countenance, how attainable and amiable God's favours is, and by what means they may get a share therein, but above all plead for this to all about you; a godly man being a long time in a secret place in prayer, when he came forth with an unusual chearfulness, he told them that he had that day got mercy for himself and all his, which was accordingly true, for all his Children proved truly godly: and indeed this is a fit season to pour out our selves before God for others mercy, as *Abraham* did, *Oh that Ishmael may live in thy sight.* For a soul that is in favour with God can prevail much with him, yea, a *Moses* intimate with God in the Mount may be a strong instrument to stand in the gap and prevail with God for favour for the Church. Famous Mr. *Welsh*, that godly Scotch-Minister, rose

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rose one night, went into the Garden, his Wife following him, heard a voice fervently uttered with sobs and tears, saying, *O God, wilt thou not give me Scotland? wilt thou not give me Scotland?* Afterwards he told her, *I have endured a great fight for Scotland this night, and hardly could I get a remnant reserved, yet he will be gracious.* This, this, is the season in which you must ply the Throne of Grace for favour to others. And oh what a privilege is it to have our cases upon the hearts of, such as are thus intimate with the Lord, as he said when it shall be thus with thee, then remember me.

*Cum sic tibi  
fuerit, me-  
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4. Long and hope for Heaven, let the sweet sense and favour of God's love and favour here make your souls restless till you advance to the full and final fruition of it in Glory, let these tastes make you long for a full draught; let these rivers or streams lead you to the spring, these beams bring you to the glorious Sun, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. In the morning of the Resurrection when you awake you shall be satisfied with his Image, be content to go into your Father's Palace, you are in a corner of Heaven when you are solacing your souls in the divine embraces. Methinks it should be irksome to part with so blessed and beautiful an object, and come down again into this lonesome dungeon of the world, however be looking for, and hastening to this coming of our dear Lord, and trust him till then, and believe that he will preserve you to his Heaven

venly Kingdom. Some of God's servants have breathed their last in the sense and views thereof.. That is a remarkable Story of Mr. Robert Bruce, a very holy reverend Minister, being very ancient, coming to Breakfast one morning, having eaten an Egg, said to his Daughter, *I am yet hungry, bring me another Egg*: he continuing in a deep meditation, said, *Hold, Daughter, hold, my Master calls*: and his sight failing him, when he had call'd for a Bible, he bade them turn to the eighth of the *Romans*, saying, *Set my finger to verſ. 38. for I am perſwaded that neither death*—Now, ſaith he, *Is my finger upon thoſe words*: when they told him it was, without any more he ſaid, *Now God be with you my Children, I have break-faſted with you, and ſhall ſup with my Lord Jeſus Chriſt this night, and ſo gave up the Ghoſt*. Which ſweet death makes me think of the notion of ſome Jewiſh Rabbins upon *Dent. 34. 5.* That *Moses* died—according to the word of the Lord; ſo we read it, but in *Heb.* it is [ *At the mouth of Jehovah* ] they ſay at the kiſs of the Lord, thoſe ſweet embraces brought him to external embraces with the Lord, he is there called the ſervant of the Lord, not before (ſaith *Eben-Ezra*) by this title is expreſſed the excellency of that eſtate he arrives to, for the ſervant is ſtill converſant with his Maſter, enters into his ſecret Conclave, is ſtill ready at his beck, ſo did *Moses* freely yield himſelf to go to God at his call; ſo muſt we. They have a ſaying [ *Majores ſunt juſti in morte quam in vita* ] That the righteous are greater in death than in

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*in life.* When the soul is separated from the body, it ministers to God perfectly in the height of Heaven, and he is also called God's servant at death, because he now goes to receive the full reward of his work in another world, as a faithful servant. In both these respects God's servants are privileged, for our Saviour saith, *John 12. 26. Where I am there shall also my servants be, and if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.* And oh the blessed reward of this service: *Col. 3. 24. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ.* Oh faithful Rewarder, oh bountiful Benefactor!

All I shall do further is to give you a short Paraphrase of this Text in this Rhapsody of a love-sick soul, under its longings for, and feelings of divine favour.

Scripture tells me, and experience seconds it, that *In God's favour there is life.* This is a truth, I can set my seal to it; what others read, I feel, oh I am sick, pained, I faint and die away without God's favour, had I never tasted it, I had never wanted it; I know in whom I have believed, I know whom I have loved, oh what would I give to have a Bed made to my wearied soul in my Lord's bosom? what sweet pain and delightful torments are in his love! oh that I had a full draught, yea, oh that I were over head and ears in loves Ocean! I am ready to call his absence cruel, and the mask and veil on my beloved's face fetcheth blood from me, yea, murders me, his absence is a Mountain of

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Iron

Iron upon my heavy heart. Since love warmed my Breast, my Heart is not mine own, he hath run away to Heaven with it, oh that he would bring Heaven along with him into it! or pluck my heart out of my bosom, and break down this Paper-wall, that I might be with him! Farewel, painted world, I have a love beyond yours, my soul scorns to stoop down so low as to crop your fairest Roses, they stink to me, compared with my Lord's love; the favour of Princes, Rocks of Diamonds, Rivers of sensual Delights are but toys to his favour; when my soul is taken up into these third Heavens, and looks down on this empty world, I am ready to say, Oh, poor Princes that see not the King of Heaven's face! there is no third person can interpose to be a witness betwixt my Lord and my heart in exchange of favour. I was in his eyes like a young Orphan, wanting known Parents, cast in the open Field, he took me up, brought me up, warmed me in his bed and bosom, and now I am comely with his love, I think the house mine own, and the Master of the House mine also, my beloved is mine, and I am his, I have given him my loves, and he hath given me more and better, his love is free, he enquired not whether I was fair or foul, black and Sun burnt, and for all my scorching, nipping blasts of sinful walking, his favours are ripening, and are come to a fair bloom, like a young Rose opened out of the green leaves, and it casteth a sweet and fragrant smell through earth and Heaven. Oh, ye Seraphims and Cherubims,

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lend me your faculties to enlarge my songs to the praise of his love, let my soul be enlarged to the vastest dimensions and extent, to conceive of, and receive his love. Oh, that such lumps of sin should get such favours for no price! his kisses infuse sweetness into my heart, yea, when God in favour to me gives me a blow, it doth me good, it is a comfort to get a cuff with the lovely, sweet, and soft hand of blessed Jesus; any thing that comes from God in favour is a welcome Guest, yea, one drop of the sense of his favour can sweeten a whole sea of sorrows, I feel it, and can sing in the fire, and feel no pain, I can climb a steep hill, and hell upon my back, when love smiles at the top, and puts its Arms under the panting Pilgrim. Oh for a years Lease, for the sense of his favour without a cloud! oh when shall God and my soul have our fill of each other. Oh, what would I give to have him ~~that~~ lieth betwixt the full sense of God's favour, and my soul taken out of the way! In the mean time let my soul have many pawns and propines of divine favour, these crumbs and hungry dinners of his love shall stay our stomachs till the full feast, and oh that these may keep the taste of Heaven in our mouths till Supper time! oh wonder, and admire my guilty soul, that justice hindereth not love, that just occasions of divine anger hath not interrupted expressions of favour, for there are none in Hell, or out of Hell that are more unworthy of God's favours. Shame confounds me to hold up my black mouth to receive

one of Christ's undeserved kisses, but he is King of his own favours as well as of me, and when he saith, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, it is fit for me to say, Behold the Son or Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. Go on, oh Lord, and let thy light shine brighter and brighter to the perfect Noon-day of Glory, let these Rivers lead me to that Ocean, and farewell Crosses, Losses, Pains, Prayers, Hopes, Fears, Flesh, and Faith, Eclipses, Ordinances, and welcome my Light, and Life, Love, Delight, Joys, Praises, Pleasure in God's presence to all Eternity.

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Mr. George Herbert, Sacred  
Poems, Dialogue, pag. 107.

**S**weetest Saviour, if my Soul  
Were but worth the having,  
Quickly then should I controul  
Any thought of waving:  
But when all my care and pains  
Cannot give the name of gains  
To thy wretch so full of pains,  
What delight or hope remains?

What (child) is the balance thine?  
Thine the poise and measure!  
If I say thou shalt be mine  
Finger not my treasure.  
What the gains in having thee  
Do amount to, only he  
Who for man was sold can see  
That transferr'd th' accounts to me.

But as I can see no merit  
Leading to this favour,  
So the way to fit me for it  
Is beyond my favour.

[ 150 ]

*As the reason then is thine,  
So the way is none of mine;  
I disclaim the whole design  
Sin disclaims, and I resign.*

*That is all, if that I could  
Get without repining :  
And my clay my creature would  
Follow my resigning,  
That as I did freely part  
With my Glory and desert,  
Left all joys to feel all smart :  
Ah ! no more, thou breakest my heart.*

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*These three excellent Treatises lately Published by  
Mr. Thomas Brooks, are to be sold by Dor-  
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try.*

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# Imprimatur

*Liber hic (cui Titulus, A Theological Discourse of Angels, &c.)*

*Geo. Hooper R. D. D.  
Gilb. Arch. Cant. &  
sacris domesticis.*

Sept. 30.  
1677.

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